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ROBERT SCHUMANN:
HIS PIANOFORTE WORKS.
BY FR. NIECKS.

CHAPTER III.—OP. I—23, 26, 28.

(Continued from page 51.)

THE "Etudes en forme de Variations," Op. 13, dedicated to his friend Sterndale Bennett, were composed in 1834. Bennett's name must not be passed by without saying a word on the relation in which the gifted Englishman stood to the German musician. "Among our daily associates," Schumann writes to his sister-in-law, "there is an Englishman, Sterndale Bennett, an excellent artist, a poetic, beautiful soul." Recalling to my mind the many notices of his friend's compositions in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, I doubt very much if Bennett's graceful genius ever found a more appreciative and at the same time discerning critic than Schumann. Without ascribing to Bennett qualities which he does not possess, Schumann places those which distinguish him in a clear light.

The first edition of Op. 13 appeared under the title of "Etudes Symphoniques." When in 1852 the composer brought out a new edition, he substituted the first-mentioned title, omitting Nos. 3 and 7, which, although related in tone and key, were not variations, and improving the form of the finale. The new name is, no doubt, more appropriate, but I cannot help thinking that the one given up was suggestive, and had a significance which is not to be found in the new name. Schumann, in the treatment of the pianoforte, goes here to the very edge of the possible; he tasks the hands to the uttermost, and not from mere waywardness, but in order to obtain greater fulness of tone and more intensity of expression; in fact, he seems to aim at the richness and variety of orchestral effects. Since the impromptu, Schumann had composed several sets of variations (they have remained unpublished), and his progress is at once visible in the superior artistic combinations, and in the greater ease with which he moves and fashions. But the distinctive features of these two works are not confined to externals, must not be sought merely in a different degree of mastery. The cause of their difference lies deeper. In the impromptu he is graceful, playful, tender, devotional; in his admiration for another, almost forgetful of himself; here he is above all earnest, manly, self-dependent. It is as if he began to feel his strength, to recognise the seriousness of life and the duties which it lays upon him; and not at all daunted by this knowledge, he is often cheerful, and always resolute to do his best.

The theme, Wasielewski informs us, is by the father of Ernestine de Fricken, a lady I have mentioned already, and of whom more anon. In the first variation, a motive of a determinate character is sustained throughout,

and assigned in turn to the different parts. Var. 2 is like the offering of a vow; the composer seems solemnly to bind himself, to protest, and to be unable to find an expression strong enough to do justice to his meaning. I shall quote bar 4:



Var. 3 is a canon, and full of a cheerful, vigorous activity. The fourth variation, too, is imitative in manner, and of a light-hearted, playful character. Of the fifth and sixth, the former interests chiefly on account of its rhythmic (the anticipation of the melody by the left hand), the latter on account of its harmonic structure. Var. 7 is of a nervous strength and bold grandeur, verging on the severe. Instead of further attempting to describe it, I shall quote the first two bars:



The eighth variation is energetic in expression, but of less importance; the ninth, on the other hand, is delicious. A palpitating accompaniment supports a sweet and very expressive melody, a modification of the theme; after a few bars, a second voice joins—the passage is marked *quasi à due*. But now the composer tears himself from the *dolce far niente*, from the bliss of idle dreams, and rushes courageously into the business of life. The finale, I think, is the weakest part of the work. There is a want of symmetry and too much literal repetition in this movement, and poetic or thematic beauty does not make up for these shortcomings. For instance, the second subject, and the whole of the tediously spun-out episodical and transitional matter which leads up to the re-entrance of the first subject, is repeated in G flat, after first appearing in A flat; only the latter part of it being



so far modified as was rendered necessary by a return to D flat and the principal subject. The pedal points are redeeming features in the finale; they brace up one's spirit to bear the not "heavenly length" of it. They form also the principal link with the theme of the variations, as part of the material used is taken thence. But though the finale may leave much to be desired, the variations themselves deserve the musician's highest respect.

The "Carnival: Scènes mignonnes sur 4 notes," Op. 9, was commenced in 1834 and completed in 1835. "It came into existence," says Schumann, "at a time when I was in a serious frame of mind, and in peculiar circumstances." This is worth noting. And to Moscheles he writes: "The 'Carnival' came into existence incidentally, and is built for the most part on the notes A S C H, the name of a little Bohemian town where I have a musical lady-friend, but which, strange to say, are also the only musical letters in my name. The superscriptions I placed over them afterwards. Is not music in itself always enough and sufficiently expressive? "Estrella" is a name such as is placed under portraits, to fix the picture; "Reconnaissance," a scene of recognition; "Aveu," an avowal of love; "Promenade," a walk, such as one takes at a German ball arm-in-arm with one's partner. The whole has no artistic value whatever; the manifold and various states of the soul alone seem to me to be interesting." This is a very important letter; it tells us distinctly what we have to seek in the "Carnival"; the depreciatory remark that the pieces are of no artistic value, alone must be rejected as unjust and untrue. It is curious to note how anxious Schumann is in this letter, and indeed always, to explain that the names were added afterwards. At another time he writes on this matter: "People are mistaken if they imagine that composers take up pen and paper with the pitiful intention to express, describe, paint this or that. The main point is whether the music without text and explanation is something in itself, and especially whether there is soul in it." The names given to pieces of music by real artists are a kind of direction-posts; they set us right as to the road we are about to travel, but we have to find out ourselves of what character the country is through which we pass, and what kind of people they are we happen to fall in with.

The "Carnival" is a higher kind of "Papillons." When Schumann wrote the latter, his soul was still in a chrysalis state, spun round with the filaments of bookish romance and poetry, hardly penetrable by reality. He was at that time of life which is so rich in enthusiasm, so poor in depth and constancy of feeling: a time which is passed in the cloud-cities that are rebuilt as fast as they are destroyed: a time with only one reality, and that a shadow—the shadow forecast by the future, the presentation of the man to come. "The germs of the future," of which Schumann spoke, are the vague imaginings of the youth that become clear conceptions and valiant deeds in the man. Schumann has now attained manhood; he is a poet. He has not only become master of his tools, but he has learned to see, and therefore can let others see. Psyche has burst at last the prison walls, and rises before us in her iridescent beauty and graceful sprightliness. She will expand, her colours will become deeper and richer, but never shall we see her again so lovely, free, and bright. Whilst in the "Papillons" he stopped short at the outside of things—at any rate, never went far beyond it—he here penetrates deeper, and approaches their essences. The "Carnival" is not one comprehensive view, but rather a series of glimpses, showing us nooks and corners of it. The *genre*, you may say, is small, but you can't deny that the man shows himself

great in it, for everything is true to nature, clear in form, and exquisite in workmanship.

The pieces were very likely composed from time to time, as persons and events occasioned states of the soul that naturally sought and found expression in music. Afterwards he may have meditated how they might be brought together under a common title. Perhaps then he thought of the great carnival life, with all its mummery, intentional and otherwise. But whether he did or not it matters little. Enough that he found a suitable name, and having found it, he prefixed to the short pieces of which this work consists a *Preamble*, which leads as it were into the midst of the crowd. It starts with a *quasi maestoso*; the doors are thrown open, the masks



called in. The *più moto* seems to picture the rushing and whirling of the crowd:



other themes which occur we shall meet again in the finale. The piece serves its purpose well; it transports the hearer into a state of mental excitability which prepares him for the reception of the many and various impressions from the characters and scenes which are about to pass before him in quick succession: clownish Pierrot,



capering Harlequin,



graceful, nimble-footed Columbine, with foolish, amorous

Pantalon,



and by the side of this light-brained crew characters of deeper import—first of all, Eusebius,



and Florestan—



the representatives of Schumann's dual nature, which he, like so many thinking and observing men, had recognised and tried here and in other works to give voice to. The former is tender, mild, and an enthusiastic dreamer; the latter wild, impetuous, and fantastic. Then there are two female masks—Chiarina, that is Clara Wieck,



and Estrella, that is Ernestine de Fricken,



whose place of residence is immortalised in these pieces. The last-named lady, to judge from allusions in Schumann's letters, seems to have had for some time a strong hold on his heart. Why the connection was broken off (1836) cannot as yet be explained, as circumstances, Wasielewski says, do not permit the matter to be discussed. Chopin and Paganini are also among the company, not to mention a coquette, and a lady and gentleman discoursing during a promenade; but all is so characteristic that it is as unnecessary as useless to say more about it. To play or hear them once is better than volumes of description. Before concluding with a few remarks on the finale, I wish to say a word or two in reference to the four notes on which the pieces, with a few exceptions, are built.

Here it is to be kept in mind that the German names do not always coincide with the English ones, and that the succession of letters is sometimes the one found in Schumann's name, S C H A, and at other times the one in the name of the town Asch. The *Sphinxes* from the "Carnival," under which I shall place the German names of the notes, will make it clear—



During the *Pause*, a great bustle is going on; there is a hurrying to and fro, every one hastens to join his standard and prepare for the fight. And now begins the "Marche des Davidsbündler contre les Philistins." It is the climax of the piece. Exuberance of youth and faith in their good cause animate the valiant band of the Davidsbündler, and we are not a moment doubtful as to the final fate of Philistinism. "Philistinism!" exclaims Matthew Arnold, "we have not the expression in English. Perhaps we have not the expression, because we have so much of the thing. At Soli, I imagine, they did not talk of solecisms; and here, at the very headquarters of Goliath, nobody talks of Philistinism." Matthew Arnold gives such an excellent definition of Philistinism and its opponents, that I cannot do better than transcribe his words. "Philistine must have originally meant, in the mind of those who invented the nickname, a strong, dogged, unenlightened opponent of the chosen people, of the children of the light. They regarded their adversaries as humdrum people, slaves to routine, enemies to light, stupid and oppressive, but at the same time very strong." Now, knowing the contending parties, let us follow the course of the battle. The onslaught of the Davidsbündler is effective; the Philistines, represented by the old-fashioned Grossvatertanz mentioned in the "Papillons," are dismayed, and to all appearance in a sad plight. Compare the easy self-complacency of the air in the "Papillons"



with the pitiful appearance it makes here—



Still, they are not beaten yet, they gather up their strength; the air, which is at first scarcely recognisable, becomes louder and more distinct. There can be no doubt about their pluck. But the Davidsbündler are more than a match for them; one hears their jeering and frolicsome rejoicing at the discomfiture of the Philistines. And now they form their lines again for

another bout, which has the same result, and the whole terminates with the complete triumph of the Davidsbündler.

Marches, as every one knows, are generally in common time; here we have one in $\frac{4}{4}$ time. Reissmann believes that it was not so much the Grossvateranz as a happy impulse of feeling which determined Schumann to choose this measure. The signals of the sixteenth century, he says, make one suppose that the marches of that age were in triple time, which supposition gains strength by the fact that when the foot-soldiers were led to the assault, the drum repeated regularly five beats, from which one can infer only that it was triple time, viz., four quavers and one crotchet. This is Reissmann's opinion, and very likely correct, although the five beats may be just as naturally distributed in $\frac{4}{4}$ time, viz., two crotchets for the first bar, two quavers and one crotchet for the second.

It seems that Schumann did not incorporate in the "Carnival" all the pieces which he composed on the four letters, as three other pieces marked 1835 are to be found in the "Album Leaves." They are No. 4, Waltz (Pauer's edition, p. 1003); No. 11, Romanza (p. 1014); No. 17, The Elf (p. 1026). Wasielewski is of opinion that No. 6 of the "Leaves of different colours" also belongs to these pieces, and although marked 1836, was very likely composed at the end of 1834 or at the beginning of 1835.

(To be continued.)

WAGNER'S "LOHENGRIN."

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF F. LISZT.

(Concluded from page 54.)

In this résumé we cannot hope to have adequately described the striking interest of this drama, or to have exhibited the delicacy of touch, at the same time so firm and fine, which pervades this picture so rich and agreeable in colouring, or how the poet-musician has there shown his learned understanding of the resources of art. The character of its personages is throughout admirably and evenly sustained. Wagner has known how to combine, with a finesse of touch that one cannot help noticing in all his work, the divine element which assured the victory of his knight, with the valorous character, the personal heroism which renders him dear to our eyes, and makes him an object of our admiration and sympathy, instead of the cold messenger which he might so easily have become. Lohengrin at first appears grave, stately, and tender as the Saint of a legend. His condescension towards his beloved is indulgent, but inexorable; her love in return gives a lustre to her whole being with the unfading happiness of being his choice. It seems as if happiness would be an unfruitful theme, so many have failed in making it interesting: and see here how this simple, common, perpetual sentiment has inspired one of the most pathetic works of art, for without question the most poetically beautiful part of the whole score is the inspired idea at first developed by the orchestra with such exquisite instrumentation, and which on each allusion to the miraculous intervention of the Holy Graal again returns as if to open to us a glimpse of Eden, where sparkle in our eyes celestial love, divine happiness, radiant glory, and beatific exaltation.

Elsa, a weak but passionate soul, dreams, prays, loves, and finds expression and sublime strains in dreaming, praying, and loving. Her song is like a harmonious breath, a magnetic inspiration; it loses itself in the infinite, and touches upon an unattainable ideal, in like manner as in the dim horizon the blue waves mingle with the blue sky. Her interview with Ortrud, following the

strident apostrophes of this woman of so savage an energy that every other personage of the drama in turn speaks of her as a "fearful woman," describes in music the same scene which we behold in pictures of St. Marguerite, with her tearful eyes of crystalline purity and sweet grace, surrounded by hideous reptiles, which, hissing, encircle the feet of the virgin devoted to their mortal fangs.

Ortrud is a creation so different from the types of envious mediocrity and vulgar wickedness which the boards of our theatres supply, that she seems likely to take her place some day by the side of Lady Macbeth and Marguerite d'Anjou, as may Elsa take hers by the side of Milton's Eve, or the antique Psyche. The rôle of Frederic is not sacrificed, although it would seem necessary that it should be so. Fascinated by the predictions, and confiding in the occult science of his wife, he is full of remorse for the mischief she has brought about, being averse to his own degradation. He regrets his lost honour; he believes in the God that Ortrud insults, and it is only by frightening him, and representing his adversary as armed with a power not from on high, that she makes his resentment burst forth in desperate efforts to avenge his injury and seize again the aim of his proud desires.

If dramatic musicians could be brought to prefer the librettos of *Tannhäuser* and *Der Fliegende Holländer* as equally poetical in their plots and the beauty of their verse, and yet of a kind most suited for musical treatment, dramatic poets must put the poem of *Lohengrin* far above all those that Wagner has till now written. Its literary merit will be sufficient to place its author among writers the most highly gifted by the tragic muse. By the side of verses most touchingly sentimental, exclamations the most happily found, a dialogue in which the secret springs of action of the personages are discovered by a clever intricacy of thought, its versification is not only sonorous and beautiful, the style elevated and appropriate to the characters, but more than all, this drama borrows a singular reflection from the Middle Age by the introduction of the old German dialect, by the employment of old terms of expression, by the frequent recurrence of words of another epoch, which, without having been completely forgotten, bear the stamp of antiquity. One must also praise the tact and good taste with which this imitation is confined to *nuances* easily comprehended even by those who have not been initiated into the secrets of an erudit archaism; for this is never pushed to the point of rendering the poem difficult to follow. But not content with recalling to the ear the old turns of expression, Wagner has extended this imitation to the disposal of the letters, which, as in the old poems of Wolfram von Eschenbach and others, are not written in capitals at the beginning of each line. This simple plan at once strikes the eye on perusing the pages of the libretto. The concordance of all these impressions transports us so much to the times and the beliefs that it revives, that we should not be surprised on going out from this opera to find that a portion of the public, endowed with a weird and tender imagination, is almost convinced of the actual existence of the Holy Graal, its temple, its knights, and its unheard-of blessings.

The music of this opera is before all things characterised by such unity of conception and of style, that there is not a melodic phrase, still less a *morceau d'ensemble*, or any passage whatever, which, on being detached from the rest, can be comprehended according to its proper signification and true meaning. The whole is compact and carefully weighed; every thing depends upon the subject, and cannot be separated from it. It becomes very

difficult to appreciate with justice fragments extracted from this work, in which there is nothing mosaic, intercalary, supererogatory, or abstruse; where all is consistent and hangs together like the meshes of a net; where all is preconceived and predetermined; where each harmonic progression is pervaded or followed by a corresponding thought: such reflection is essentially German in its systematic rigour, and one might regard this great work as the most premeditated of inspirations. It is easy, on the other hand, to account for the fact that each episode may lose some of its charm when heard by itself, if we consider the principle on which Wagner has musically personified rôles and ideas. The recurrence of the five phrases whose wanderings we have tried to follow: that of the introduction, that which is heard when the judgment of God is invoked, that which accompanies Lohengrin's appearance, that which he sings on administering the oath to Elsa, and that which accompanies the impious threats of Ortrud, as well as the less frequent but always justifiable recurrence of the secondary motives, naturally stand in the way of one's following the entire dramatic idea, and experiencing all the emotion which ought to result from such a complication, so new, so clear, and so lucid in its turns and constant windings, especially when at the same time one has to familiarise oneself with all the lights and shades displayed, all the intentions hidden in the general formation of the plan of this beautiful monument.

There are some who, by the aid of a single idea, a single invention, or a discovery apparently of the smallest possible importance, introduce immense changes into the sphere to which such discoveries belong. There are others who, without bringing the knowledge of a new fact, or introducing an element hitherto passed over, to the science of their predecessors, by a new disposition of old material enlarge the domain to which they have turned their attention. As an innovator, Wagner belongs to the latter; his system is closely allied to that of Gluck by the importance with which he invests the eloquence of dramatic declamation, and to that of Weber by the de-claimed eloquence and the sensibility of his instrumentation. Wagner would certainly have written the preface to *Alcestis** if Gluck had not already done so. But he has

gone beyond Gluck and Weber in carrying out their theories. Availing himself with rare felicity and bold intelligence of all the conquests that music has made since the death of these great men, utilising all the resources offered by newly-invented instruments, as well as the beautiful use to which they have been put—especially by Meyerbeer and Berlioz—he has enlisted in his service all the means resulting from the progress of modern times; and, by a system more vast than that of Gluck's, and by principles more absolute than those of Weber's, he aims at securing a predominance for the poetic sense, to which both voices and orchestra must be subservient. Unless one has seen and listened to Wagner's scores, and has studied their skilful construction and scenic effect, it is by no means easy to arrive at a just idea of the result which he has obtained by the complete union of the operation of these two sources, or, as one might better express it, these two torments of emotion. Both as a symphonist and as a dramatist he is equally extraordinary. By this concentration of rare and different faculties, he has succeeded in creating an *ensemble* which may please or displease, but which as a whole one cannot deny to be as equally logical and perfect in its colossal conception as in the very least of its details. Madame de Staël's definition of music as the architecture of sounds, allows us to compare the structure of Wagner's magnificent edifices with an architectural order of which neither the partisans nor the opponents could change or modify the least of its laws, without at the same time destroying the whole character of its style.

After having tried to explain to the reader the fundamental principles of Wagner's dramatic system—which, in pursuance of the desires and efforts already manifested by Gluck, aims at attaining a more complete fusion of the effects of poetry and of music, even to the play of the actors, from whom he demands a profound comprehension of their art, making even the *nuances* of his orchestration agree with their mute gestures, and in certain scenes using the symphonic motive as indicative simply of their presence—it will be less easy to describe the style of instrumentation which he has adopted. We can only point out certain significant traits, such as the very remarkable division of the orchestra into three different groups, obtaining thus three distinct bands: viz., a string band, a wind (wood) band, and a brass band. Instead of massing and distributing them in accordance with conventional or arbitrary rules, he classes them in distinct bands, from each of which he obtains a quality of tone appropriate to the situations and personages of his drama. This distribution is one of the most salient of his innovations, and one of the first to make itself felt. With this persistence in sub-division before us, it is no surprise to learn from an autobiography of Wagner, published some years ago in a German paper, that the first of his overtures which was performed in Leipzig was written by him in three different coloured inks, in order to facilitate the comprehension of his score for those musicians who wished thoroughly to examine it. Black ink was used for the strings, red for the wood wind, and green for the brass instruments. The prosecution of this parallelism of sound has necessarily obliged Wagner to mix up in his instrumentation instruments which hitherto had been generally employed by themselves, and to unite with them as almost inseparable some others. Consequently it is his usual habit to employ three flutes, three oboes (two oboes and a cor anglais), three clarinets (two ordinary and one bass clarinet), three bassoons, three trombones, and a bass tuba. Among other advantages this ternary system admits of complete chords being attacked and sustained by instruments of the same *timbre*. It is this that gives

* *Preface to ALCESTIS.*—“When I undertook to set the opera of *Alcestis* to music, I proposed to myself to avoid all the abuses which the mistaken vanity of singers and the excessive complaisance of composers had introduced into Italian opera; and which, from the most splendid and beautiful of spectacles, had reduced it to the most tiresome and ridiculous. I wished to confine music to its true function—that of seconding poetry by strengthening the expression of the sentiments and the interest of the situation, without interrupting the action and weakening it by superfluous ornaments. I thought that music ought to give that aid to poetry which the liveliness of colouring and the happy combination of light and shade afford to a correct and well-designed picture, by animating the figures without altering their contours. I have, therefore, carefully avoided interrupting a singer in the warmth of dialogue, in order to make him wait for a tedious ritornel, or stopping him in the midst of his speech upon a favourable vowel, either that he may display in a long passage the agility of his beautiful voice, or that he may wait till the orchestra has given him time to take breath for a *point d'orgue*. I have not thought it right to pass rapidly over the second part of an air, when this is its most important portion, in order regularly to repeat the words four times, or to finish an air when the sense is incomplete, in order to give the singer an opportunity of showing that, according to his fancy, he can vary a passage in several different ways. In short, I have tried to abolish all those abuses against which for a long time good sense and good taste have called out in vain.”

“I have felt that the overture ought to bring before the audience the character of the piece about to be represented, and at the same time indicate to them its subject; that the instrumental accompaniment should be proportioned to the interest and passion of each scene; that especially it should not leave too marked a void in the dialogue between the air and the recitative, in order that it should not break into the sense and connection of a period, nor interrupt the progress and energy of the action. I have also thought that it should be a great part of my aim to attain a beautiful simplicity; I have accordingly avoided a parade of difficulties at the expense of clearness. I have attached no value to the discovery of novelty, unless it has arisen naturally from the situation and in accordance with the expression demanded. Finally, there is no rule which I have not been willing to sacrifice in favour of a good effect.”

light and shade to his orchestration in a new way, which he uses with the most exquisite art, harmoniously blending it, in a manner as new as it is impressive, with the declamation, upon which it is made to serve as a sort of comment. Wagner also makes great use of the violins in sub-divisions. In a word, instead of employing the orchestra as an almost homogeneous mass he separates it into different channels and rivulets, and sometimes, if we may venture to say so, into bobbins of different colours, as numerous as those of the lace-makers; as these do, mingling them, rolling them together, and like them producing from this surprising tangle a manufacture, an embroidery of marvellous and inestimable value, in which the brocade of a solid texture spreads itself out over the most diaphanous transparencies.

To a mind so fully imbued with the poetry of the drama, to an organisation so sensitively alive to the impressions derived from the most trifling details of his art, this peculiar tendency of his genius to divide the orchestra into three currents of sound, which, like the waters in the confluences of certain rivers, preserve their different tints while flowing in the same bed, without mingling their muddy, azure, or verdant waves, must instinctively have suggested itself. Its application by him to every idea of a purely intellectual order follows as a matter of course. It has been effectively carried out here. Wagner had already brought it to bear in his earlier operas; but in *Lohengrin* he has reserved quite a different palette for his principal characters. The more attentively one examines the score of this opera, the more clearly one perceives what an intimate relation he has established between his orchestra and his *libretto*. Not only has he, as we have said, personified in his melodies the sentiments and passions which he has brought into play, but it has also been his aim to invest their outline with a colouring appropriate to their character, and simultaneously with the rhythms and melodies which he employs, he has adopted a *timbre* peculiar to the personages which he has created. Thus the motive which first appears in the introduction, and recurs each time that allusion is made to the St. Graal, or is developed as in *Lohengrin's* recital towards the close when he declares his sublime mystery, is invariably confided to the violins. Elsa is almost always accompanied by wind instruments, which give rise to the happiest contrasts when they succeed to the brass. One is especially moved when, in the first scene, a pause follows the long speech of the King (whose *rôle* is throughout supported by trumpets and trombones, which then predominate in the orchestra), and when one hears this soft and airy murmur arising like the perfumed undulations of a celestial breeze to assure us, even before Elsa has appeared, of her spotless purity. The same instrumentation comes like a refreshing dew to extinguish the sombre flames of the duet of Friedrich and Ortrud, when Elsa appears in her balcony; it is also used in the grand wedding march of the second act, and succeeds in representing this holy exultation and innocent happiness in a manner which renders this *moreau* one of the most precious, if not one of the most telling, in the opera.

The difficulties of the *mise-en-scène* and of the satisfactory execution of Wagner's operas, combined with the serious character of their subject-matter, their elevated style, and the close attention they demand from the listener, will all, alas! contribute to retard their popularity. The severity of their perfection is an obstacle to their meeting with the vulgar applause which is readily accorded to works of short vitality, or with that immediate enthusiasm which the genius of Rossini and Meyerbeer has evoked by the glittering lightning-like manner and rich harmonies with which they have clothed every

human passion. Is it then necessary to wait till Wagner's scores have been embedded in the dust of ages, for the learned to discover by perusing them the marvellously ingenious secrets which they contain, and for poets in retrospective admiration to be enamoured of those heroes who surpass a hundredfold our paltry and vulgar conceptions?

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RUBINSTEIN'S "PARADISE LOST."

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

EVERY lover of art must have rejoiced in his heart of hearts on reading the announcement that, after a lapse of eight years, Rubinstein is once more to adorn the London season with his presence. As pianist, he will take his audiences over the immense range of his repertoire of ancient and modern masters; as composer, he will, by his own interpretation, initiate them into his individuality. Will he also appear in a capacity in which he is no less a phenomenon—in that of conductor? Assuredly it cannot be urged too strongly on the directors of the leading musical societies of the Metropolis, not to lose this opportunity of enlisting his co-operation in the production of one of his great choral works. And of these, none is more suitable than his *Paradise Lost*; none reflects more truly the merits so peculiarly his own; and again, none is so specially fitted to attest that one excellence in which no country in the world can attempt to vie with England—the excellence in grand choral performances.

Paradise Lost though it be, let it not be lost to England!

This remarkable work, an oratorio in three parts (Op 54), was published in 1860, and therefore dates from a comparatively early stage of Rubinstein's career. It was the precursor of his *Tower of Babel*, and both belong to the category styled by him "sacred opera"—a title the fitness of which is questioned by many. But what's in a name? The text is adapted freely, and on the whole successfully, from the first, seventh, and twelfth books of Milton. The first part portrays the revolt of Satan, and his expulsion from heaven with his rebel host. The second part is devoted to the Creation: light, the firmament, land, sun, moon, and stars, things animate and inanimate, and at last Adam and Eve, are called into existence. The third part assumes the fall of man: the triumph of Satan's host is followed by the lamentation of the blessed legions; and the final struggle between the two leads to Adam and Eve being driven out of Paradise.

Not to mention a traditional anachronism in the second part—the vegetable kingdom being created before the sun—the weakness of the book consists indisputably in the delineation of our first parents. Hardly have they been afforded a glimpse of Eden, when they receive their admonition, and are hurled out of their "happy seat," a doleful and lachrymose couple: and the third part falls the more grievously short of Milton's conception, not only because in the original their existence is by no means ephemeral, but because Milton certainly did not intend them to be so rudely handled. We have no reason to envy our first parents as presented to us in the book; nor does the powerful orchestration of the introduction to the third part, describing the temptation and fall, altogether reconcile us to the existence of a gap. The first and second parts, on the other hand, are highly poetic, and drawn with that felicity which generally foretells a musical treatment of at least equal merit.

Rubinstein is frequently compared with Brahms and other eminent composers of the modern school; but it should be borne in mind that they must be judged on entirely different grounds; for Brahms is essentially polyphous in his writing, whereas Rubinstein stands alone and aloof among living composers in one respect—his orchestration is almost consistently homophonous. Brahms appeals perhaps more to the intellectual, Rubinstein to the emotional. And *Paradise Lost* is an excellent specimen of these characteristics. Hardly ever does he resort to the method of interweaving, in vocal writing, a leading subject with the accompaniment; and only in two choruses (Nos. 5 K, 20 B) does he employ counterpoint, though even here the fugue appears accidentally rather than as part of the scheme, and gives way to the previous homophonic treatment before the close of the movement. Owing to this rigid adherence to a principle, his recitative often verges on the monotonous; to stoop to nicety of detail seems almost to go against his grain; but it is in his grand choruses, in the redundant flux of free writing sometimes amounting to a downright defiance of accepted form, that his style achieves triumphs, that he compels the admiration of the most sceptical by his truly marvellous fertility of invention and combination, and carries us away by the boldness, swing, and momentum of his genius.

The epic character of the poem is preserved throughout the oratorio by declamatory recitative; and only three times is this continuity broken: by two airs in the first, and by a trio of the archangels in the third part (Nos. 3, 6, 23)—all three admirable examples of simple and beautiful writing. The solo choruses for female voices have the graceful and mellifluous charm of Schumann; while some of the broad and massive choruses rise almost to Handelian grandeur. The opening chorus of the first part, in which “the blessed voices with jubilee and loud hosannas fill the eternal regions,” is of exquisite beauty, and we value it as a jewel no less precious than the Pallas Athenea chorus in the *Maccabees*. Then follows the contest between the angelic and infernal hosts, which rages with increasing force up to the climax, when the momentum of the fugal movement is suddenly arrested by the piercing “Weh” of the vanquished (5 M). This entire movement is a perfect pattern not only of effective arrangement, but of the clearness and force with which Rubinstein can convey a sublime idea. The first part closes with a grand triumphant hymn, “Freudensang erfülle rings die Welten” (14—Allegro), soaring higher and higher on the wings of a thrilling harp accompaniment, while the simple pizzicato chords of the combined string band mark the rhythm of the movement. Indescribable indeed is the effect of this chorus, written as it is in that unfettered style in which the breach of irksome form is perhaps more honoured than its observance; and who but a favourite of the Muses could thus, with sacred song and golden harp, bring home to us the poet’s language: “Such concord is in heaven?”

As regards symmetry and compactness, the second part is perhaps the best of the three. Nothing could be more characteristic of Rubinstein than the marvellous ingenuity with which he evolves from the introductory “Chaos” a beautiful Creation, developing from a germ every phase until it assumes a definite shape, imparting to every element a vocal and instrumental colouring of its own, enunciating in every part of the scheme a distinct idea, never betraying poverty of thought by tawdry magnificence, and unrolling before us a picture so vivid, so alluring, so harmonious and unique, that we are almost impelled to join in the Allelujahs which greet the *Creation* on its completion. It is the product of a

luxuriant imagination pencilled with transcendent ability, a master-piece of that descriptive style in which the Muses fitted the composer to excel.

While thus the first and second parts might have been called into existence by a single effort of creative power, the third shows unquestionably a falling off, and this is traceable chiefly to the poverty of the text. The introduction is meant to supply the missing link between the Creation and the fall of man, for the opening chorus of the infernal regions starts with the fall as a *fait accompli*. And surely Rubinstein has taken Adam and Eve in too dolorous a sense: so much so that these specimens of the quintessence of dust make us almost exclaim with Hamlet, “Man delights not me; no, nor woman neither!” Even their first utterance (11, 19 B and C), “Wer bin ich, wo bin ich,” is not fresh as the dewy morning, but sepulchral as the “Mors . . . Mors . . .” in Verdi’s *Requiem*, and they groan through the third part in much the same fashion. Is this Man, the microcosm in the macrocosm? No: in the interest of mankind be it insisted that our first parents did not so whine. The redeeming features of this last part are the charming lyric trios of the archangels (23, 28 L), and the double chorus portraying the final struggle between the heavenly and infernal legions (28); this last is followed by the archangels decreeing the ejection of mankind, and the booms of the big drum mark the closing of the gates of Paradise.

Such are the outlines of Rubinstein’s first oratorio. He completed it when he was hardly thirty. Need we wonder that it is not, perhaps, as mature as subsequent works, that with the abundance of precious metal are intermixed some incongruous elements? But never for a moment can we doubt that it is a great work which is before us—a work whose beauty of thought and style has a lasting charm, and reveals that innate and irresistible grasp of genius which impresses itself upon whatever it touches. The most fastidious critics recognise it as one of the most important works produced by living composers. And, as such, is it not eminently fitted for the London and provincial choral societies—nay, for a Birmingham Festival?—the more so if Rubinstein could be induced to conduct it himself. Moreover, it must not be imagined that it bristles with vocal and instrumental difficulties: the efficiency of the band being assumed, the cardinal requisite is a large double chorus of sufficient mettle and training to give due effect to the contest and contrast between the blessed and infernal legions. In this respect, the recent production of *Paradise Lost* at the Leipzig Gewandhaus was hardly more than a miniature performance, for here a small chorus was pitted against a large band in a diminutive room. And yet those who were fortunate enough to be present will never forget how Rubinstein conducted his great work—not like an over-punctilious pedagogue, but in his own grand, calm, intelligible, and sweeping way, inspiring artists and audience alike, and stamping his vigorous individuality upon a performance which every genuine lover of art will ever remember as one that marked an epoch in his life.

C. P. S.

“TRISTAN UND ISOLDE” IN BERLIN.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

BERLIN, March 31, 1876.

THE overwhelming majority of those who have heard *Tristan und Isolde* in Berlin have pronounced it a great and brilliant success; and this verdict was emphatically confirmed by last night’s—the third—performance, of which I hasten to send you a rapid sketch.

Of all operas, *Tristan und Isolde* is perhaps at once the simplest and the most difficult; the simplest, because the old Breton legend admits of but few characters, of next to no chorus, and dispenses with scenic effects; the most difficult, because the dramatic situations, though simple, are so protracted, and the principle of "infinite melody" is pushed so rigidly to its logical consequences, that the powers of both singers and band are strained to an all but excessive degree. And it is, therefore, with respect and admiration that he who delights in work for its own sake looks up to both the managers and performers who have bestowed such extraordinary labour, patience, and devotion on a truly gigantic task.

The beautiful performance in Weimar last year, with the Vogls of Munich as the *Tristan* and *Isolde par excellence*, was fresh in our minds; but the Berlin performance, specially inspired as it is by Wagner, and being on a larger scale, exceeded our boldest expectations. Wagner, it is well known, excels as stage manager no less than as conductor; hence the performance bears in all its details the impress of his finishing touches, and, in its entirety, presents an almost faultless ensemble.

All the parts are in the hands of eminent artists. Mme. Voggenthaler is transcendent as *Isolde*. There is something intensely sympathetic in the ring of this melodious and beautifully trained voice; something that goes straight to your heart's core, and leaves its mark there—a charm enhanced by the spontaneous vivacity of her action, which, though powerful, is yet tempered by the softness of true womanhood. "Grace in all her steps, in every gesture dignity and love;" every inch the "royal Irish maid"—such is this *Isolde*. The same, alas! cannot be said of Niemann's *Tristan*. He proved, on that occasion at least, inferior to his fame, and eclipses his Munich rival as much in size as he seems to fall short of him in art. "But then he acts so beautifully," his admirers always tell you, apologetically, when you complain of his uncouth singing, though even this excellence was not always apparent last night; for only in two scenes did he carry the audience away with him—in the climax of the love-duet in the second act, and when, in the third, though tortured by pain, *Tristan* rushes forward to meet *Isolde*—both scenes in which a vast and impetuous flow of music seems to burst every barrier, and rises to the climax with an almost Dithyrambic swing. But Niemann, it must be remembered, is no chicken; perhaps we saw him at a disadvantage, and so alarming a personage by all means deserves the benefit of the doubt. The parts of Brangane, Marke, and Kurwenal, are taken by Mlle. Brandt, Betz, and Schmidt. All three show by their consummate ability what eminent artists can make of minor and, in some respects, very thankless parts; and the delineation of Brangane by Mlle. Brandt is not only an exquisite combination of refinement and force, but attests a remarkable manysidedness in contralto and mezzo-soprano parts. Add to this a highly cultivated band and perfection in stage arrangements—for the deck of the ship with the Cornish coast in the background in the first act, the garden in front of Marke's castle in the second, and the court of *Tristan*'s castle on the coast of Brittany in the third, are patterns of *mise-en-scène*—and it will readily be admitted that this is in the true sense of the term a model performance.

The length of the different scenes has been timed minutely by facetious critics—the love-duet of 50 minutes, Marke's peroration of 10, *Tristan*'s soliloquy of 40 minutes, &c.; but the whole opera, given as it is *in extenso*, occupies little more than four hours, and is shorter than the *Meistersinger* curtailed.

Wagner is said to have reaped very substantial benefit from the first performance; the walls of his Bayreuth

mansion probably now resound the old carol, "My pockets full of money, and my cellars full of beer;" and his triumph in Berlin is justly regarded as a good omen for the *Nibelungen* in Bayreuth. *Tristan und Isolde* is a work hardly as yet likely to please the million, but that it is truly a great work is an impression which forces itself even upon those who are not committed to Wagner for better, or worse. But of course there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous, and there are those who ridicule this "intoxicated" couple; there is the over-patriotic Teuton who denies that Wagner has a right to fish in the Irish Channel for a legend, and reproduce it in the garb of German music; there are those who condemn it on aesthetic grounds; nor are there wanting those who, in their sour fashion, like a bilious critic nearer home, exclaim, "I don't understand it, and I don't want to understand it." All this is nothing new; but *Tristan und Isolde* will not be dismissed in a few sweeping sentences; and those who read Wagner before they attempt to criticise him, approach it rather as embodying a principle of which this, the great reformer's own favourite work, is a logical deduction and a lasting record, for good or for evil.

C. P. S.

THE PROFESSOR ON PREJUDICE.

"DID it ever strike you that music, religion, and politics are very much alike in this, that they all have a peculiar tendency towards making a man bigoted?"

Thus the Professor to Harry's wife, the other evening. The two gentlemen were seated, one on each side of a bright fire, and the lady at her work-table a little way off. She bridled just a little, as she replied, without looking round,—

"I am not going to be lectured; and if you mean that remark as a hit at me, because I—"

"Don't stop, Miladi," laughed Harry.

"Nay," interrupted the Professor, "let me explain; the hit, as you term it, is comprehensively intended, though perhaps originating in the reflection of the last few minutes, that may be said to be brought on specially by our conversation at tea-time."

Pretty Mrs. —— laughed a little silvery peal, and then, with a mischievous glance at her husband, said to their old friend,—

"Well, as you are so penitent, and have expressed it in such a comprehensive manner, I will give you permission, for this occasion only, to light up, without which I am quite sure you will never be able—"

"To convince you that you are bigoted, my dear?" suggested her husband.

"Don't be impolite, sir, or I shall revoke my permission."

The blue wreaths soon ascended from the tubes of consolation, as Harry had christened the pipes; and after a slight pause the Professor began:—

"Prejudice, in these especial points, seems to be a universal weakness. We, as a trio, personally illustrate this, I think. Here are you, my dear madam, kind and good, as I know you to be, and so charitably disposed towards every one that you are called the family peace-maker, who nevertheless would unhesitatingly and unsparingly condemn any one whose religious convictions differed from those taught by the Protestant Church of England in which you were bred."

Of course no woman could be expected to pass over such an attack as this in silence; accordingly, the lady commenced in a somewhat injured tone,—

"I am sure, Professor, I am the last person in the world to condemn another undeservedly, but truth is truth, and it is universally known and admitted that ours is the—"

"Shall I finish it for you?" laughed the Professor, as she stopped, suddenly becoming conscious that she was exhibiting the very weakness of which he had spoken.

"It was a shame to take me in, in that way," she answered, good-temperedly; "but now let me alone, and pass on to Harry."

"And myself," added he. "Well, we will both cry with the psalmist, 'Confitebor meam culpan,' won't we?"

"Yes, certainly," was Harry's response; "though we are sure to recommit ourselves on the first opportunity. But surely there are other subjects on which folks show prejudice."

"Undoubtedly, but none to the extent of the three I named."

"Why?"

"Because they are so comprehensive. 'There's a deal of human nature in 'em,' as Sam Slick would have said. You see they are not entirely based on the mathematical, or *fact part* of man, the aesthetic and spiritual element being largely represented."

"What, in politics?"

"Certainly. Is not what we term politics the art and science of governing men—not only in their broader relations of country to country, but of class to class, trade to trade, family to family, individual to individual? and do you suppose that all these different nationalities, interests, tempers, capacities, and incapacities, and the thousand and one unforeseen events and differences that are continually cropping up, can be comfortably arranged by one set rule and order, like a long division sum? Depend on it, the aesthetic, the spiritual, must enter largely into the question, else our clever statesmen would never make any mistakes. The true and lasting ruler in politics must not only be a clever or learned man—he must also be a subtle psychologist."

"Do you consider that to hold good in the other two points?" inquired Harry.

"In both, without doubt," was the reply.

"Then you class music as on a level with religion and politics—the two acknowledged great world-powers."

"Assuredly, and why not? as the two last-mentioned deal with, and embrace, every shade of opinion and requirement within the range of their especial world, so also does music. Each is based on important material requirements of human nature, and each is infinite in its spiritual nature."

Here the lady looked incredulous, and catching the Professor's eye, shook her head.

"You won't allow it?" he inquired.

"I can't," she replied; "much as I love music, to compare it with religion appears a kind of desecration."

"Luther did not think so," said the old gentleman.

"Perhaps not; but he must have had in his mind psalms and spiritual songs."

"No, no—he meant music itself, undoubtedly: hear what he said—*Music is the nearest to Theology* of anything; I would not give the little I know for all the treasures of the world."

"I am sure he would not have said so if he had been obliged to play five-finger exercises and scales every day," retorted Mrs. —, with a laugh.

"Like Sissy," chimed in her husband; "poor child! how she does hate them!"

"Unless the child be utterly deficient of musical feeling, which I have rarely met with in one so young," said the Professor, "there is no reason why she should dislike even the technical exercises, which are necessary to develop the finger-power. All can be made interesting if the teacher be competent; but," turning to the hostess, "it is scarcely fair to advance such an argument as that of the exercises in conjunction with our subject. You may as well decry the strength and dignity of manhood because it has first passed through the weakness of childhood, or sneer at an oak because it was once an acorn."

"I had no intention of decrying the merit and value of music, I assure you," rejoined the lady, "except in so far as disputing your implication of its being, as it were, on a par with religion."

"Now, see how you differ from the great men of old; to wit, Socrates, Plato, and Plutarch! They regarded it as a *sacred art*; they spoke of it as the *spiritual language of a divinity*, penetrating the being with a mysterious and irresistible power. The mythology of all nations has represented music as springing from a divinity, and *divine in itself*, and in all religions—from the most ancient to Christianity—music is the only thing pertaining to earth that is permitted to follow man into eternity. 'In the ancient Elysium, in the Walhalla, of the Norsemen, in Odin's Hall, Mahomet's Paradise, and in the Heaven of Christianity, music has ever been eternalised.' But let us not view the matter entirely through the spectacles of others. Let us inquire, what is it that separates thinking, reflective man from everything else in creation?"

"Language, undoubtedly," answered Harry.

"What does Professor Max Müller tell us about language? Man is man only by means of speech; but in order to invent speech he must be already man. Now, what is language?"

"The power of expressing thought."

"Not exactly that, perhaps; for thought can be expressed and understood without words. Language is the link between mere noise and harmonious emotional vibrations. Educated language is music in a crude form; and in its highest state of perfection is called *poetry*. Is it not so?"

"Decidedly," was the united response.

"And the more nearly that poetry approaches music in its sonority, and its rhythmical and expressive qualities, the more perfect hold has it on the highest and noblest part of our nature. *Music is poetry glorified*. If, then, man—the crowning work of creation—is the only creature so constituted as to be worthy, and capable, of language—and if the greatest praise that can be bestowed on language, in its highest form, is to compare it to music—what say you, dear madam, am I wrong in claiming for music the high position I do?"

"I think I must admit you are right," said Mrs. —; "but I am not going to let you have it all your own way either. How is it that these three wondrous powers, for which you claim such comprehensive qualities, tend to make us bigoted? I should have thought their study would have extended our views, and made us more cosmopolitan."

"Pardon me," replied the old gentleman, "I did not say so, I only—"

"Inferred it," said she, quickly.

"Well, if you like, let it be so; though, in truth, I only asked a question, which you have not yet answered."

"I will answer for both," said Harry, "and in the affirmative; but at the same time must say with my wife that I cannot see the reason."

"It is, I think, as I said just now, from their very comprehensiveness, and from the fact that the spiritual element appeals more to the imagination than the reason; and the one being unduly proportioned to the other, it follows that the personality, vanity—or whatever you please to term it—of each individual asserts itself to the detriment of the *entirety* of the subject on which he is engaged. In dealing with infinite ideas, man fails to grasp more than is patent to his limited capacity. Hence, even clever men too often fasten themselves to one portion of one of these great subjects—because it assimilates with their own personality in some way—while they fondly imagine they have grasped the whole. It is only a great genius that can deal with the infinite; for genius alone possesses a portion of infinite capacity."

"But you can't do away with personality," said Harry.

"Nor would I wish to; for that would reduce us to the same pitiable state of insignificance as the Brahmin, who said that all earthly or heavenly good was concentrated in the pronouncing of the word 'Om,' silently, to all eternity."

"A most blessed state of non-individuality, certainly. By-the-by, who is it that writes, 'Every man has his own style, as he has his own nose?'" asked Harry.

"Lessing, the philosopher, I believe. But what would you imply?"

"That a man had better stick to his own than borrow other people's."

Harry's wife laughed merrily as she exclaimed, "Fancy me with your nose, Harry!"

"True," said the Professor, "an interchange of noses would be very awkward, especially where the article did not fit. But I don't think, Harry, that your application of Lessing's words is quite to the point. It is one thing the sticking to what is *your own*, or even being proud of it because it suits you, but quite another when you say, 'My nose is so perfect that, in fact, there is no other nose in the world.' That is the principle I argue against."

"But nobody goes to that extent."

"Surely! since when has the Millennium arrived? But I don't mean to sneer in saying this; I only wish to point out to you that the prejudice, most, if not all, of us have, towards any views, doctrines, or school in which we have been brought up, or have made our study, makes us too often unjust, and therefore blind

to the good qualities of others who think differently ; and that, too, on purely metaphysical points, that must ever be debatable ground. Men don't quarrel about what they positively know and understand. Who disputes that twice two are four ? or asserts that what we call a right angle is not a right angle ?

" Of course not," replied Harry, " those are things that commend themselves to universal common sense."

" Yes ; and the three points in question, do they not command themselves to common sense ?" inquired the Professor.

" Of course—yes," was the answer, " for they undoubtedly are in the natural constitution of man ; only you see the fields are so vast, and men's natures are so different, that it seems impossible to meet on one common ground."

" And so to make matters quite straight and pleasant," rejoined the old gentleman, " each allots to himself a small portion of the vast field, and imagining himself the favoured lord of the richest soil, shows his gratitude by industriously condemning every one else, and despising them, as a millionaire looks down upon a pauper ; forgetful that Nature, in her wondrous beneficence, causes the sun to shine and the rain to fall *everywhere alike*, and that the whole earth is subject to the same great universal law of infinite creation. The religionist, the politician, and the musician are alike open to this reproach. Let us deal with music. See how the strictly—so called—classical school barely tolerates the operatic ; turns up its nose at the (illegitimate) showy school, yclept drawing-room music ; writhes in horror at the executive ; and utterly despises the poor pariah dance-music (from which it sprung) ! And the classical itself, is it not equally despised, laughed at, or tolerated by the others in their turn ? It seems to go the round, as it were. If one is called ' mere ear tickling,' another is christened ' sensational ' or ' gymnastic ' ; if one is ' dry and heavy,' is not another termed ' mere froth, and nothing in it ?' What with the music of the past, the present, and the future, with their varieties, the multiplicity of opinions present us with a veritable tower of Babel. ' Vox et præterea nihil ' may justly be the motto of many ; for so wrapped up in themselves are they, that they can credit no good in another."

" And you think that no one can be entirely right in itself ?" said Harry.

" Certainly not ; for anything in nature to stand alone without regard to its converse is a blot on the great law of duality or balance of powers. Thus, in his anxiety after one set form and precedent, the strict classicist too often ignores that music is an emotional art. The song, or melody writer, forgets that form and rule are necessary to give beauty to his beauty ; the mere dance writer, that there is a depth beyond rhythmic time ; the executive or concert-gymnast, that noise and fury are but poor substitutes for grace and beauty ; and the harmonist that the single sound of the human voice has oftentimes more power than all the polyphonism in the world. We must look through the microscope as well as the telescope before we can realise the union of extremes that form the links in the chain of creation's circle. O for the wisdom of the winged insect that sips the honey from every flower !"

" And runs the risk of being poisoned by some," suggested the lady : " surely it is better to be content with those we know to be right."

" Dear madam," replied the Professor, " your ' Liberal ' husband—speaking politically—will tell you that is the old Tory principle of ' Rest and be thankful,' and is scarcely in accordance with the spirit of modern progress ; but, in truth, you pay human nature a poor compliment in the suggestion. What do you say of the wisdom of that man who declined eating mushrooms at all, because he had read of people being poisoned by some spurious sort ?"

" Ha ! " put in Harry, " that is very mild ; your rigid teetotaler goes further than that, for he is not only afraid to look at a glass of beer himself, but would deny it to every one, because there are people who take too much."

" So in avoiding Scylla you run into Charybdis," said the old gentleman. " I believe that all extremes of individual opinion are bad : they lead to bigotry. It is a libel on the natural common sense of humanity for any one person, school, or class to arrogate to themselves a supreme dictatorial power. Both art and nature teach us this ; and yet men are constantly—

through vanity or selfishness—rebelling against their inevitable laws."

" But if man had none of that rebellious feeling that induces him to adhere obstinately to what he considers right," said Harry, " there would be no true progress in art or anything else."

" Think you so ?" was the reply. " Well, there is a *yes* and a *no* to that. Let us see how that may be."

(*To be continued.*)

Foreign Correspondence.

MUSIC IN NORTH GERMANY.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

LEIPZIG, April, 1876.

THE performance of Verdi's *Requiem* at the Gewandhaus, of which we spoke in our last letter, was apparently such a success that the directors felt obliged to repeat the work at an extra concert. Though now the room was but half filled, this repetition confirmed the excellent impression made upon the present writer by its first representation. Additional interest was excited by Mme. Peschka-Leutner, who at the first performance had sung the solo soprano, now taking the alto part, instead of Fr. Nanitz, who was suddenly indisposed. Mme. Peschka-Leutner executed this new part to perfection, and we doubt much whether there is any other soprano singer who would make a like experiment with such decided success. Mme. Schuch, from Dresden, interpreted the soprano part, and during the first few numbers sang very well, but in the latter part of the work appeared fatigued.

The first performance in Leipzig of Joseph Rheinberger's *Requiem*, composed in memory of the soldiers who fell in the German war of 1870—71, took place on Palm Sunday. It was well executed by the St. Thomas's choir, in conjunction with the Gewandhaus orchestra, under the direction of Professor Richter. As this work was published five years ago, we are at a loss to understand why it has only now been brought before the public. Although in a former letter we expressed our admiration of the *Requiem* by Lachner, and in our last of that by Verdi, we must confess that Rheinberger's work most enlisted our sympathy.

Unlike all earlier settings of the *Requiem*, Rheinberger's work evidences a freer and more ideal conception of the text. He does not seem to us to affect the orthodox faith of the Middle Ages, nor has he made his " Dies iræ " the subject of theatrical representation of the Last Judgment. Being totally unacquainted with the sentiments produced by the words " Quantus tremor est futurus," and also with the feelings of deepest contrition produced by the " Ingemisco tamquam reus culpa rubet vultus meus," we will not therefore give an opinion about these parts, but content ourselves with affirming that all the other movements of Rheinberger's *Requiem* show deep and truly religious feeling, which finds vent in agreeable and noble musical expression. The first part is a fervent prayer for peace and eternal rest ; one of the finest movements is the andantino (in A major, 9-8), " Qui Mariam absolvisti " ; the melodious effect of the piece for six voices is excellent ; very fine are also the " Domine Jesu " (F major, 4-4), followed at the words " Quam olim Abrahæ " by an extraordinarily clever canon (for four voices) in F major, which is repeated after the " Hostias." This canon, as well as the double-fugue at the words " Lux aeterna " and " Cum Sanctis tuis," are real gems of polyphonic writing. The whole work leaves the most agreeable impression, and we hope that it will soon become universally known.

We have now to record the last two Gewandhaus concerts of the winter season, the last but one of which brought us a great surprise. At this (the twentieth) concert, we heard Mr. Emil Sauret—as the programme says—from London, a violinist of the first rank, until now entirely unknown to us. Mr. Sauret, with regard to technique, has not many equals amongst the violinists of the day. We have seldom heard anybody surmount the greatest difficulties on the violin with such clearness and certainty. Mr. Sauret proved his great virtuosity most in his

performance of the "Ungarische Lieder," by Ernst, and of a transcription of the sextett from *Lucia*, for violin solo, by Lubin. But Mr. Sauret is not merely great in technique; he is also endowed with great musical feeling, and rendered Mendelssohn's violin concerto (especially the andante) most charmingly. Storms of applause, such as are seldom heard at the Gewandhaus, followed the performances of this still youthful artist. Another very pleasing and artistic appearance on the same evening was that of Mme. Magdalena Koelle (formerly Fr. Murjahn), from Carlsruhe, who enraptured us in the aria of Susanne, from *Fidèle*, and in songs by Schubert and Schumann. The orchestral pieces—Cherubini's *Abencérage* overture, and Beethoven's D major symphony, No. 2—were excellently played.

The twenty-first and last Gewandhaus concert opened with Mozart's "Ave verum," that short chorus, which in its devotion and sublime beauty is as peerless as Raphael's "Sixtine Madonna." It was followed by Haydn's ever young and fresh B flat major symphony (No. 12 in Breitkopf and Härtel's edition), and closed with Beethoven's ninth symphony.

At the eighth and last chamber-music concert at the Gewandhaus were heard Mozart's string quartett in C major, Schubert's in D minor, and Beethoven's quintett in E flat major, Op. 16, for piano and wind instruments: all well known to us, and capitally rendered. Kapellmeister Reinecke was at the pianoforte, and Concertmeister Roentgen took the first violin. The "Florentiner" Quartett Society gave us another very interesting chamber-music evening, under the direction of Jean Becker. We there heard a very good string quartett in C minor, Op. 89, by Joseph Rheinberger, and also made acquaintance with one in D minor, by Heinrich von Herzogenberg, a thoroughly interesting work.

MUSIC IN VIENNA.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

VIENNA, April 27th, 1876.

THE eighth and last concert of the Philharmonic offered a programme of only three numbers, of which, however, every one was the delight of the hearers. Haydn's symphony in C major (the first of the Salomon set), Volkmann's serenade in F, and Beethoven's seventh symphony were each received with enthusiastic applause, the minuet by Haydn and the second movement in Volkmann's serenade being encored. The execution was faultless, and plaudits on plaudits thanked the performers and their conductor, Hans Richter, for the artistic delight.

The last concert of the Musikverein, conducted by Herbeck, opened with a suite by Bach in D, published by Senff, in Leipzig, and ended with Beethoven's fourth symphony. The vocal music consisted of choruses by Isaac, Brahms, Herbeck, and Mendelssohn, performed by the eminent choir of the society. At an extra concert of the same Society, it was intended to bring forward Haydn's *Creation*, and every one looked forward to hearing this oratorio for the first time under Herbeck's guidance, but the failure to obtain solo singers caused a change in the programme which, though without soloists, met with a well-earned success. It included Mozart's fuga, with introduction (Köchel's Mozart Catalogue, 546), for stringed instruments; the adagio from the quintett in G minor; a choral figure by Bach, and the first of Schumann's Skizzen for pedal-flügel, both performed on the organ by Herr Zellner; a largo by Handel, arranged for violin, harp, and organ. Further—choruses by Crassellius, Walther, Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Handel, viz., Beethoven's solo song, "Die Ehre Gottes," arranged for four parts, with organ and orchestra, by Herbeck; Mozart's "Laudate pueri," from Vesper III. (Köchel, 339); and Handel's "See the conquering hero comes," from *Judas Maccabaeus*. Particularly Beethoven's song, the largo by Handel, and Mozart's magnificent fuga were of imposing power. The chorus was that of the Singverein; the orchestra was that of the Conservatoire; the director, Herr Hellmesberger.

The same orchestra performed in a concert for the benefit of the Pensions-fond of the professors of the Conservatoire.

It was, properly speaking, more a concert of M. Saint-Saëns, the eminent organist from Paris, as three pieces of his composition were heard, viz., a piano concerto, performed by himself; an orchestral work, "Danse macabre," which he conducted; and a fantasia on the organ. The "Danse macabre," a symphonic fiction, is a somewhat feeble imitation of Berlioz, piquant and interesting *en détail*, but making no deep impression; it was, however, encored. In the same concert, the Comtesse Wickenburg, respecting the act of benevolence, sang an aria from Mozart's *Titus* with remarkable artistic feeling and well-schooled voice.

The programme of the last concert of the Singacademie consisted of choruses by J. W. Franck, Hans Leo Hasler, Mendelssohn, Haydn, and the Trauer-ode of Bach, composed in the year 1727, published in the edition of the German Bach Society, as also by Peters. This ode reaches in the choruses the same height as those in the *Matthäus Passion*; for the airs it demands exquisite singers.

The programme of the second concert of the Conservatoire included piano and violin concertos by Beethoven, Spohr, and Volckmann, together with Liszt's "Hungaria" fantasia, and the "nightingale" air from Handel's *L'Allegro*. Considering the youth of the pupils, the performances were respectable enough; one pupil, Fr. v. Károlyi, had the honour to play some days before in the presence of Liszt, who visited the Conservatoire, and expressed his admiration for the splendid results of the director's (Hellmesberger) guidance.

The above-named French composer and virtuoso, Saint-Saëns, gave also a private concert, which was attended by a very distinguished audience. He performed another piano concerto, some transcriptions of Bach's works, and a fantasia by Liszt; and conducted another symphonic tone-picture for orchestra, entitled "Phaëton." It met with great applause, and was encored; and then there was even a call for a repetition of the "Danse macabre." I am sorry to say that "Phaëton" is even weaker in invention than the former. It resembles, like some others of his compositions, a brilliant firework, leaving nothing behind. Soul and warmth are wanting in these works, as was the most evident in the adagios of the concerto; there are brilliant and difficult passages, fresh and intermixed with spirited details, but the colours and effects are always the same. The future will show whether the inner value of these compositions is strong enough for their duration. As a performer M. Saint-Saëns is much to be praised, particularly as regards his rhythmic feeling. It is said that an opera of his will be soon performed in Weimar, and that the result will decide its acceptance in Vienna. There are still a dozen and more piano recitals to be mentioned, but as they are only of local interest I pass over to the Opera.

At the Opera—i.e., the Italian Opera in the Hofopernhaus—there have now been twenty-five representations; eleven more are to come. At present, during Passion-week, Mme. Patti and the principal singers are gone to Pesth, to give a few representations there. The summit of brilliancy was reached with the *Barbiere*, Patti being incomparable, and also the other singers praiseworthy. Such performances of comic operas will never be adequately represented by Germans. Another excellent impersonation by Mme. Patti was that of Giulietta; particularly the valse she sang ravishingly; she is really the first among the first-rate singers of our age. As *Gli Ugonotti* has never been performed before in Italian in Vienna, it was looked for with great interest, the more so as Patti was announced as Valentine. But the great *diva* could not gather new laurels in that rôle, it being too much out of her sphere. In spite of all her best intentions, it was but too visible that she struggled in vain against her nature. The opera being announced for repetition, Sgra. Patti became hoarse, and Mme. Lucca at the last moment undertook the rôle of Valentine, and enraptured the audience by her very dramatic representation. Here Frau Lucca, who was heard also in the rôles of Mignon, the two Leonores (*Il Trovatore* and *La Traviata*), and Selica, reached the summit of her success. The next after the two favourites is Mlle. Heilbron, who is respected as a singer and actress, though she wants the higher *verve* to electrify. She performed Violetta, Margherita di Valois, Oscar, Filine, Lucia, Gilda, Margherita, and Maria. A very scant representation was that of *Un ballo in Maschera*, a new singer, Sgra. Bianchi-Montaldo, performing Amelia as

badly as possible. This unfortunate Amelia vanished directly like a fatal meteor. Another new singer, Sig. Benfratelli, performed twice as Tonio and Manrico; he served only as a shift to give evidence of the want of costly tenors. Signori Nicolini, Capoul, Tamet, Strozzi, Padilla, and the rest are more or less praised in their different rôles, which, however, cannot often make us forget our own singers—such, for instance, as Herr Rokitansky, who, whenever he sings, is quite the best among the Italians. Regarding the difficulties which result from engaging a whole Italian company, it would be far better to engage in future only one of the *divas*; the public in general care little for the rest. There are still to be mentioned two German representations given on Palm Sunday and Monday for the benefit of the Pensions-fond of the Opera, the first having been *Der Schwarze Domino*, with Mme. Lucca; the second, *Tannhäuser*, with Frau Ehnin, in its old familiar dress, and with the overture as it used to be. German opera recommences on the 4th of May. Operas performed from March 15th to April 10th:—*La Traviata* (four times), *Lucia, Gli Ugonotti* (twice), *La Favorita* (twice), *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Il Trovatore* (twice), *Margherita*, *Romeo è Giulietta* (twice), *L'Africana*, *Mignon*, *La Figlia del Reggimento*, *Il Barbere di Siviglia* (twice). German representations:—*Der Schwarze Domino*, *Tannhäuser*.

Rebels.

Serenade (No. 2, in D major) für Orchester, von S. JADASSOHN.
Op. 46. Partitur. Leipzig: Fr. Kistner.

UNDER the title of Serenades, Nocturnes, Suites, Variations, &c., we have met with good many works by Brahms, Lachner, Raff, Volkmann, and others, written for small orchestras, which, as occasion may serve and by way of contrast, are sometimes welcome as a change from the more severe and more pretentious "Ocean," "Faust," and "Lenore" symphonies—the natural results of Beethoven's ninth symphony—which demand our whole attention, just as sometimes a Haydn symphony is regarded as a welcome relief to one by Beethoven or Schumann. That works symphonic in form, but restricted in extent and in the number of instruments employed, seldom come to a hearing in England, must be put down to the fact that when we have an orchestra at all for public performances it is generally a complete one and of large dimensions: hence the feeling that, having the full complement of players generally at hand, we may as well get all we can out of them. As our concerts have increased in number, so happily our programmes have decreased in length, and, as was formerly the case, two symphonies at one and the same concert are no longer regarded as admissible. Except in our theatres and in amateur circles our orchestras are all on the complete modern scale. Orchestral works of small dimensions and written for a small orchestra seem, therefore, to stand but a poor chance of being brought to a hearing at our best concerts. But for this we should not have been surprised or disappointed ere this to have heard Herr Jadassohn's previous "Serenade in Four Canons," Op. 42 (reviewed in these columns in May, 1873), at the Crystal Palace or elsewhere, especially as, in addition to its extreme cleverness, there is much of a generally pleasing character about it.

Having proved his skill while writing under contrapuntal restrictions, Herr Jadassohn has fairly earned the right to appear under less canonical conditions. His second Serenade—which has since been followed by a third, brought forward at one of the Gewandhaus concerts at Leipzig in December last—comprises three movements: (1) Intrada e Notturno, (2) Menuetto alla Marcia, Menuetto da capo, and (3) Finale. It may fairly be spoken of as a genial and unpretentious work of a well-versed musician, who seems to feel more sympathy for Beethoven's predecessors than for him or his successors, and has but little individuality of his own to parade. Nevertheless, its naturally flowing melodious character, and the admirable way in which by its scoring the most is made of the modest combination of instruments for which it is laid out, will go far to recommend it to those who listen to music solely for the pleasure it brings. Recalling the fact that listening to high-class music becomes

more and more an exercise for the intellect, but that after all such works as Haydn's symphonies are probably productive of the largest amount of pleasure to the largest number of hearers, it may safely be predicted that this Serenade of Herr Jadassohn's will not lack admirers among those who prefer a *naïve*, easy, going, and pleasing style of music to the sensational or profound.

Compositions for the Pianoforte. By ANTON RUBINSTEIN.
No. 1, Melody; 2, Cracovienne, Op. 5; 3, Tarantelle, Op. 6; 4, Romance, Op. 26, No. 1; 5, Impromptu, Op. 26, No. 2; 6, Nocturne, Op. 28; 7, Barcarole, Op. 30; 8, Romance, Op. 44, No. 1; 9, Scherzo, Op. 44, No. 2; 10, Impromptu, Op. 44, No. 3. Augener & Co.

RECALLING that M. Anton Rubinstein's latest pianoforte concerto, No. 5, in E flat, is marked Op. 94, it will be readily seen that the compositions now before us are comparatively early works, and therefore among those which he probably accounts as the least important of his essays. As being mere trifles in comparison to his larger works, it would be manifestly unjust to attempt to form an opinion from them of his powers as a composer. We must therefore speak of them as we find them. What strikes the eye at once on looking through them is the paucity of marks of expression. Not once is there any indication that the loud pedal is to be used; and this absence of directions is extended to passages which it would be utterly impossible to execute as written without its aid. One arrives at the conclusion that it is the composer's intention that the pedal may be used or not throughout, according to the taste and convenience of the performer. We cannot, however, approve such reticence or licence, for in certain cases a composer may intend parts of his composition to be played with pedal, and parts without. Take, for instance, the last in Book V. of Mendelsohn's *Lieder ohne Worte*, one of the most popular of these pieces, and one which we have rarely heard played as Mendelsohn intended. Here we happen to have learnt directly from the composer that he intended the first two pages to be played entirely without pedal, and which is only to be used, as indicated, on the repetition of the theme. This being so, it seems surprising that Mendelsohn, always so careful in his directions and marks of expression, should not have inserted *sensa pedale* at the beginning of this piece, in contradistinction to the *colla pedale* which occurs at a later period of it. With so impulsive a pianist as Rubinstein, who seldom plays even his own compositions twice in succession in precisely the same manner, it is less surprising that he should leave exponents of his music to exercise their own judgment in this particular.

The selection of pieces which heads this notice was probably made from the feeling that they are among the most practicable and the most easily comprehensible of Rubinstein's lesser works. Though they all require a wide grasp of hand and neat playing to give them their due effect, and on this account are by no means to be ranked as easy music, they will not overtax the powers of well-practised players. There is a good deal of charm about the first of these pieces, the melody of which is to be found in an inner part, and is distributed between both hands. There is scarcely a bar without stretches of a tenth for the left hand. Apart from its general charm, if neatly executed, it is to be recommended as an excellent study in wide stretches, in constantly changing positions of the hands, and in giving prominence to a melody at first sight not always easily discoverable. For the Cracovienne, which is somewhat wild and diffuse, and has too often the look of a finger exercise, we confess we do not much care. The Tarantelle, on account of its brilliant, showy, and tuneful character, will probably become the most popular of these pieces, if indeed it is not so already. The Romance, a sort of song without words, is one of the easiest to play. The Impromptu (in A minor), though somewhat dry, will be found an improving study. The leading theme of the Nocturne (in G flat) is smooth and full-sounding, but its middle part contains some intricate passages which require nice handling. The Barcarole (in F minor), not to be confounded with another Barcarole in A by the same composer, but for extended stretches for the left hand and for a somewhat teasing coda, is altogether of a simpler description. A second Romance (in E flat) is the shortest of the series,

and has nothing terrible about it. In the Scherzo (in A minor), written in 3-4 time, quavers predominate, except on the too frequent recurrence of a figure of repeated double notes of semi-quavers which is but ill adapted to the genius of the pianoforte. All the charm is reserved for a trio in the relative major key, which is a happy contrast to the first theme. After a repetition of this, a reminiscence of the trio brings it to a close in a tranquil and contenting manner. The second Impromptu (in G major), with a second part in B major, is one of the most genial of these pieces. We look forward to speaking of M. Rubinstein's later and more important works, some of which we shall doubtless have the opportunity of hearing him play during the ensuing month.

Select Works for Pianoforte. By JOSEPH RHEINBERGER. Revised and Fingered by E. PAUER. Augener & Co.

CALLING to mind the great success that has attended Herr Rheinberger's quartett in E flat, for pianoforte and strings, which fairly may be ranked by the side of Schumann's quintett and quartett in the same key, and similar works by Brahms, we have often wondered that more attention has not been turned to some of his greater works—e.g., especially his symphony, "Wallenstein's Camp." On hearing the scherzo from this symphony performed a year or two ago, we remember, even under the depressing influence of a concert at the Royal Albert Hall, to have been greatly impressed with it. More recently we have heard of its having been received in Edinburgh with almost the same unbounded applause as was accorded there to Raff's "Lenore" symphony. That it, as well as other important works of this composer, has not been brought to a hearing in London in its entirety, is to be regretted.

In the absence of these, it is satisfactory to find that at least one publisher has turned his attention to some of his pianoforte works. Those at present before us include "Three Short Concert Pieces," Op. 5; "Four Concert Studies," Op. 9; and "From Italy," Three Pieces, Op. 29. With the freshness and musicianly character of all we are delighted, but like most pieces published in sets, as is the German custom, they cannot all be regarded as equally attractive. The favourites doubtless will be "The Chase," from Op. 5; the "Melody" and "Wander-Songs," from Op. 9; and all three of the pieces "From Italy," Op. 29—but in which, it must be said, though Herr Rheinberger is a Swiss by birth, Italy is regarded from a very German point of view. We welcome this as a first instalment of J. Rheinberger's pianoforte works, and hope it may be quickly followed by others.

Sœur Monique. Rondo for Pianoforte. By F. COUPERIN. Augener & Co.

FRANÇOIS COUPERIN was born in Paris in 1668. As a family of musicians the Couperins have been spoken of as holding a position in France similar to that which the Bachs held in Germany. The compositions of François Couperin, the most eminent of his family, consisted principally of Suites de Pièces. In his preface to a collection of such pieces, he says: "In composing these pieces I had always a distinct object in view; different occasions have furnished me with ideas, and the titles they bear indicate what I wished to express." He may therefore in a small way be credited as having been among the first to compose on a "poetical basis." Whether the Sister Monica whom he here depicts was the same as inspired Ary Schaeffer's celebrated picture of the mother of St. Augustine, we are unable to say. To both works of art, however, a quaint grace and refinement attaches, which might well have been derived from the same source. In a programme of one of his "historical" performances, Herr Pauer has not inaptly spoken of this little piece of Couperin's as a very pretty "Rococo" melody, the quaint monotony of which is not at all unacceptable. We may add that there is a quiet charm about it which will strike those who are not familiar with this composer's writings, as unique, and that it is quite easy to play.

Sonata (in D major) for the Pianoforte. By JULIAN EDWARDS, Op. 2. Novello, Ewer, & Co.

FOR students of musical form there can be no better practice

than that which the writing of sonatas affords. The composition of a sonata may be regarded as the stepping-stone to a symphony. Those who have accomplished the one should have no fear in attacking the other, always provided, of course, that they have familiarised themselves with something more than the rudiments of writing for the orchestra. The composition of a sonata at all is a proof of its author's earnestness; its publication is quite another thing. The sonata before us—which, however, can only be regarded in the light of student's work—shows plainly enough that its author has familiarised himself with some of the earlier of Beethoven's sonatas, and that therefore he has at least been brought up in a good school. His work is by no means free from grammatical errors. One in which he has again and again indulged consists in resolving the bass note of the third inversion of a dominant seventh upon the tonic instead of upon its third. Though not difficult to execute as a whole, there are passages—e.g., the succession of shakes on page 17—which, if they are to be played as they are written, are out of all proportion in difficulty to the rest. The same may be said of the jumps of two octaves and a sixth for the left hand on the preceding page. His work, however, is not without musical feeling, as instanced in parts of the slow movement. The best advice we can offer Mr. Julian Edwards is to persevere in composing sonatas, &c., but to do as Brahms does—put them by for a couple of years, and then see if he thinks they are worth publishing.

Sehnsucht, by RUBINSTEIN. Transcribed for Piano by MAURICE LEE. Op. 59. Augener & Co. *Rhapsodie pour Piano, par SYDNEY SMITH.* Op. 137. London: Ashdown & Parry.

As with some artists the overcoming of technical difficulties seems to be their chief delight, so, it would seem, some amateurs content themselves, for the astonishment rather than the delight of their friends, with the semblance of difficulties overcome. Hence the demand for a light and showy style of drawing-room pianoforte music. Another reason for the existence of such music is the ignorance of parents. Full many a professor knows but too well that his re-engagement to teach the daughter of such parents depends upon the apparent progress which such a pupil has made during a single quarter. With flimsy music which has a certain appearance of brilliancy it is manifestly easier to impress the ignorant and not too confiding parent than with music of a more solid texture. Hence, again, the demand for such music. From a musician's point of view we can express no sympathy with it; as reviewers we cannot altogether pass it over.

"Sehnsucht" is one of the most charming and most favourite of Herr Rubinstein's songs. As treated by Mr. Maurice Lee it comes rather under the denomination of a fantasia than a transcription proper. As a piece based upon a capital theme, and as one which makes a good deal of show without making any extraordinary demands upon the fingers or intellect, it will doubtless meet with the approval of a certain class of players.

Much the same might be said of Mr. Sydney Smith's "Rhapsodie." It consists of a broad and simple melody in G flat major, which afterwards receives a varied treatment. After the approved fashion, the melody is made conspicuous by being engraved in large-sized notes, the accompanying parts in small. Showers of small notes abound which will delight the eyes of those who can see them, and who affect a partiality for this style of playing, and will astonish the ear of the listener. Of these two pieces, that by Maurice Lee is by far the easiest to render with effect.

Songs, with Pianoforte accompaniment, composed by ANTON RUBINSTEIN.

- No. 1. Grant me Daylight's Golden Splendour (*Sehnsucht*), in F.
- 1a. Wishes (*Sehnsucht*), in E flat.
2. Oh, why is all Pleasure so fleeting (*Gelb rollt mir zu Füßen*).
3. Rich Dews Bespangle (*Es blinkt der Thau*).
4. The Ara (*Der Ara*).
5. The Haunted Wood (*Die Waldhexe*).
6. I had a Tuneful Nightingale (*Ich hatte eine Nachtigall*).
7. Throw back the Veil (*Schlag die Tschadra zurück*).
8. Just like a Lark the Sun that meets (*Wie eine Lerche in blauer Lust*).
9. Morning (*Morgens*).
10. Sweet Violet, where call'st thou me? (*Veilchen vom Berg*).

11. Spring Song (*Frühlingslied*).
12. How like a Flower thou Bloomest (*Du bist wie eine Blume*).
Augener & Co.

As several of these songs have been repeatedly heard at some of our best concerts, and may therefore be regarded as already more or less familiar, we need not speak of them in detail. As songs they are to be ranked very highly. All are more or less attractive, several especially so—one, indeed (the first on the list), so much so that a French composer has taken it as the theme for a drawing-room fantasia. Music and words go well together, the former having evidently been suggested by the latter. The accompaniments are happily not overloaded, but always interesting, and often highly dramatic. As our favourites we single out Nos. 1, 2, 4, and 5, of which the last-named, of a descriptive character, is especially striking. The Oriental colouring which appropriately pervades "The Asra" and "Throw back the veil," will not pass unobserved. On the whole, we think M. Rubinstein's individuality stands forth in a more pleasing light in these songs than in the pianoforte pieces of which we have spoken above.

History of Music. By FREDERIC LOUIS RITTER. London : W. Reeves.

THIS book, which professes to be a history of music from the Christian era to the present time, originally formed the substance of a course of lectures delivered by Professor Ritter before the students of Vassar College, New York. In this form it was published in America several years ago, and was afterwards reprinted in the *Choir*. That these lectures of Professor Ritter have now been issued in England in a single volume affords sufficient evidence of the estimation in which they have been held. This short statement in reference to its antecedents, which its publisher has failed to put forth, seems due to its author, as otherwise he might be accused of grave omissions in his book which now bears date 1876. Had he been specially engaged to write it up to the date it bears, one may take for granted that he would have found a good deal more to say respecting Gounod than at the time he wrote his lectures was possible. Schumann's opera, *Genoveva*, having been revived in Leipzig with great success in 1874–75, he would not have put forth the statement that "save a few performances at Leipzig in 1850, and afterwards through the influence of Liszt at Weimar, the work has not been revived on the stage since." Nor would he have spoken of Wagner's theatre at Bayreuth as a plan of the future. Apart from such apparent shortcomings, for which its author is thus in nowise to be held accountable, this book calls for high praise on account of the concise and pleasant manner in which a vast amount of information is imparted to the student of musical history.

Though Professor Ritter's book does not pretend to be an exhaustive history of music, but rather a friendly and reliable guide, it has been his aim not only to throw light upon those early periods of musical art, scarcely known or appreciated by amateurs—and, without exaggeration it may be said, by the great majority of musicians—but also to present a comprehensive and complete picture of each important epoch in our art.

The scope of his book will be apparent from the following summary of the contents of each lecture :—

I.—The Gregorian Chant, the Folk-song, Troubadour-song, and the invention of Harmony ; from the invention of Harmony to the latter end of the fourteenth century.
II.—The old Flemish, German, English, Italian, and Spanish Schools (the great epoch of Catholic Church Music and the Madrigal) ; from the latter part of the fourteenth century to the death of Palestrina.
III.—The Oratorio, including the Passion, the Mystery and Miracle Plays, and Protestant Church Music ; from the twelfth century to the death of Schumann.
IV.—The Opera, from its first invention in Italy to the death of Gluck.
V.—The development of Instrumental Music, from the sixteenth century to Haydn.
VI.—Catholic Church Music, from the death of Palestrina to our own time.

VII.—The Comic Opera.
VIII.—The Opera, from Mozart to Wagner.
IX.—Instrumental Music ; the epoch of P. Emanuel Bach, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.
X.—Instrumental Music ; some of Beethoven's contemporaries and successors, up to Liszt.
XI.—Musical Literature.

To some few in this country Professor Ritter has long been known not only as a deep thinker, a well-read musician, and a clever theorist, but also as the composer of some most exquisite songs. That he is able to think for himself, and that when stating his opinion upon matters which are still *sub judice* he is unbiased by party feeling, is made fully apparent, and makes his book all the more valuable. Though under the disadvantage of writing in a language foreign to him, the few errors and blemishes of style which occur in his book are only such as any intelligent reader may correct for himself, and detract but little from its literary worth. The carefully compiled index of existing English and foreign musical literature with which his book is supplemented, though far from complete, is by no means the least valuable part of it. With the exception of Mr. Hullah's Lectures, we can recall no book in the English language of recent date which attempts to cover the same ground. Both as useful to the student as a book of reference, and as interesting and instructive to the general reader on musical subjects, this work of Professor Ritter's may confidently be recommended.

MUSIC RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

From AUGENER & CO. : *Isola*, "Love is enough," Song.—(BERTINI, SEYMOUR, & CO.): *McHardy*, "The Shipwreck," Song.—(LAMBORN COCK) : *Dudney*, "The Forest Glade," Song ; "The snow lies white," Song. *Gardner*, "Nor let soft slumber close your eyes," Evening Song. *O'Leary Vining*, "The spirit's low replies," Song.—(CRAMER & CO.): *Mariott*, "The last word at the gate," Song. *Morgan*, "Oh, tell me not my love is vain," Ballad ; "O life, thou art most fair," Song. *Schenck*, "Simplette," Ballad.—(CRANZ, Bremen) : *Bruch*, "Fair Ellen," Ballad for Soli, Chorus, and Orchestra. (LUCAS, WENNER, & CO.): *Fuller*, "Trois Pensées Caprices,"—(MUSIC & ART ASSOCIATION) : *Urich*, "Pity the wives and babes at home," Sailor Song.—(NOVELLO, EWER, & CO.): *Salaman*, "Eva Tual," Irish Song.—(PATRICK & SONS, Glasgow) : *Frost*, "Yours truly," Waltz. *Rimbault*, "Popular Transcriptions for Harmonium or American Organ," Three Books.—(WILLIAM REEVES) : *Gilbert*, Church Services.—(WEEKES & CO.): *Treffry*, "Westward Ho! For England," Song.—(JOSEPH WILLIAMS) : *Leybach*, "L'Alsacienne," Fantaisie-Valse ; 4ème Boléro brillant. *Pascal*, "Autrefois," Danse caractéristique ; "Nell Gwynne," Piece.

Concerts, &c.

ALEXANDRA PALACE.

THE most important item in the programme of the sixth of these concerts, which took place on the 25th of March, was the "Eroica" symphony. The performance of this glorious work was a crucial test for every individual member of the orchestra, but all came out of the ordeal triumphantly, and Mr. Weist Hill may fairly congratulate himself on the result. We regret, however, to be obliged to chronicle the perpetration of one unfortunate mistake at this concert. We allude to the introduction of a cantata—"The Consecration of the Banner"—the composition of a Mr. J. F. H. Read, a too ambitious amateur. It is destitute of a single original thought, and its general construction betrays utter ignorance of both orchestral and vocal writing. Mme. Marie Krebs played Weber's Concertstück in a marvellous manner, the pace at which she took the last movement being absolutely terrific, notwithstanding which she maintained the utmost clearness and accuracy throughout. The concert concluded with Auber's overture to *Le Philtre*, a bright and sparkling operatic prelude that is too seldom heard. Mme. Edith Wynne and Sig. Monari Rocca contributed vocal solos.

The revival of Handel's oratorio *Susanna*, on April 1st, attracted a brilliant audience, including a large number of our leading musical celebrities.

This work was composed in the year 1748, when Handel was in the sixty-fourth year of his age, and, of the nineteen oratorios that he gave to the world, is the seventeenth in order of production. It was first heard in the course of the following year, and owing probably to the excellence of the soli numbers, which were obviously written to exhibit the capabilities of eminent contemporary vocalists, it was far more successful than *Solomon*, which also owes its existence to the same period. *Susanna* contains seventy-two numbers, and of these but nine are choruses; whereas the companion oratorio is chiefly celebrated for its splendid choral writing, which forms the most important element of the work. Handel found that, notwithstanding the attraction of per vocalists, it was necessary to omit many portions on the second performance. On the present occasion these curtailments were adopted, and even further excisions would have been acceptable, as the predominance of recitative and the paucity of choruses produce a slightly wearisome effect.

The overture is in the orthodox form, made familiar by Lulli in the first instance, and calls for no particular remark. The story is then presented in dramatic form, the action opening with a chorus, "How long, O Lord," in which the Israelites languishing in Babylonian captivity cry to God for deliverance from their afflictions. Although unusually brief, it is full of fine points, and its construction on two "ground basses" enables the composer to afford evidence of his skill in ingenious contrapuntal device. An air, "Clouds o'er take," assigned to Joachim, the husband of Susanna (and which is curiously enough assigned to the contralto), immediately succeeds. The contrast between this number and the duet between husband and wife which follows, is charming. The first is somewhat sombre in feeling, but the outpouring of joyous nuptial love and happiness pervades every bar of the duet. Chelsias (the father of Susanna) next appears, but as he only hinders the action by asserting that he is very glad to witness such conjugal affection in a recitative and a somewhat uninteresting air, we could well spare him. After another long recitative we reach one of the gems of the work, the contralto air, "The parent bird in search of food," wherein Joachim laments his departure. This is in all respects an exquisite conception. The graceful beauty of every phrase, combined with a chastened expression, that appeals directly to the heart of the listener, realises the touching and simple earnestness of the words in a marvellous manner. Susanna is now introduced, suffering from a vague presentiment of coming evil, and gives utterance to a prayer, "Kneeling at thy throne of glory," which is characterised by the most pathetic beauty, and earnest feeling. A chorus, "Virtue shall never long be oppressed," now succeeds, but although the words are retained, the music is replaced by that of another chorus from *Semele*, "Endless pleasure"—a plan adopted by Handel, and wisely followed at this performance. The Elders now appear on the scene, one (the tenor) being depicted as a weak-minded man, who knows what is right, but has not sufficient moral courage to avoid the wrong, while the other (the bass) is a man of ungovernable passion and stern determination. The recitative and air, "Tyrannic love," which is inserted here, is too well known to need comment. After another recitative, in which they mutually confess their unholy passion, the second Elder gives vent to his feelings in a *bravura* air, "The oak that for a thousand years," which is full of energy, and thoroughly Handelian in its massive proportions. After agreeing upon their plan of action, the first Elder is again heard in an air, "When the trumpet sounds to arms," which contains no feature of a specially noticeable kind. The first part is here brought to a close with a remarkably fine chorus, "Righteous Heaven," which culminates in a fugue on the words "Tremble, guilt." This, one of the most important numbers in the oratorio, will bear comparison with some of the finest specimens of Handelian choral writing. Susanna, with her attendant, having sought a cool retreat, sings an appropriate air, "Crystal streams in murmurs flowing," full of "local colour," the accompaniment suggesting in the most artistic and charming manner the flowing of the stream and the rustle of the breeze amongst the luxuriant vegetation. The attendant here very unnecessarily sings to her mistress "a tender strain," composed by Joachim in ante-nuptial days. This air, "Ask if you damask rose be sweet," has achieved immense popularity, and has been reproduced in various forms. The handmaid then relates the story of her own love passages, and the death of her lover. We again venture to think that the whole of the part of this attendant might be omitted with great advantage both on musical and dramatic grounds, as the idea is clumsy, and simply retards the progress of the story for no assignable reason. Susanna now prepares to bathe, and the Elders intrude on her privacy—the first urging his unholy suit in love-sick strains, and the second giving utterance to his determination to effect his object in an impetuous air full of energy and impassioned force. This song, "The torrent that sweeps," is a worthy pendant to that already referred to in the first part, and affords

the singer an opportunity of displaying his vocal skill to the utmost—florid passages succeeding each other with untiring persistency.

The trio "Away, away," is a very fine example of dramatic writing, the musical phrases allotted to each of the Elders and Susanna being admirably characteristic, the sentimental entreaty of the one and the brutal threats of the other being no less skilfully expressed than the earnest remonstrance of the persecuted woman. After more recitative, in which the false charge is first made, the familiar air, "If guiltless blood," succeeds. This is undoubtedly one of Handel's masterpieces, the manner in which the dignity of conscious innocence is portrayed being no less striking than the touching beauty of the music that expresses Susanna's pious resignation to the will of Heaven. The populace then assert the supremacy of the law in a short chorus, "Let justice reign," which simply consists of a fugue, but slightly extended. Joachim, having heard of his wife's peril, in the following song, "On the rapid whirlwinds wind," expresses the eagerness with which he hastens to her aid. The accompaniment to this air is extremely brilliant; it bristles with rushing scale passages, and its agitated character is thoroughly in consonance with the exciting nature of the subject. On his arrival the people meet him with words of consolation and assurance embodied in a chorus, which contains some exceedingly interesting fugal writing.

The third part opens with an air in which Susanna, although her doom has been pronounced, asserts the fearlessness begotten of innocence; but neither this nor the succeeding one, in which the first Elder hypocritically laments the fate in store for her, possesses any noteworthy points.

The dramatic interest now reaches its height. Daniel expostulates with the people, and demands in the name of justice to test the truth of the accusation levelled against Susanna. The following chorus, "Impartial Heaven," is the most important in the work. It opens with a *largo*, in which the orchestra reiterates a somewhat noticeable figure, the voices meanwhile entering in passages of imitation, and this leads to an elaborate fugue extracted from one of the Chancery Anthems. The villains are then unmasked in the course of a long recitative, after which Joachim has an air, "Gold within the furnace tried," of the ordinary Handelian type; the oratorio concluding with a chorus, "A virtuous wife," which is of the simplest possible construction.*

A word of hearty commendation is due to the Alexandra Palace authorities for this revival; and although *Susanna* is perhaps inferior to *Esther*, it contains so much really beautiful music that its performance will always be listened to with great interest. On the present occasion, too, the same conscientious regard for perfection of detail was as conspicuous throughout the performance as in the case of the former revival, and Mr. Weist Hill justly received the hearty congratulations of the audience. Miss Anna Williams sang the trying part of Susanna admirably, and Miss Julia Elton has added immensely to her artistic reputation by a really magnificent rendering of the music allotted to Joachim. The two Elders were personated by Messrs. Shakespeare and Foli, who acquitted themselves of their task in a manner that was simply perfect; the former of whom laboured under the disadvantage of singing a part more fitted for a baritone than a tenor. The chorus did their work admirably; the lengthy recitatives were admirably accompanied on the organ by Mr. Frederic Archer; several encores were insisted on; and the genuine enthusiasm of all concerned was pleasant to witness.

The last concert of the series, on April 8th, commenced with a very fine performance of Mendelssohn's symphony in A minor (the "Scotch"). Of two novelties at these concerts, the first was Ferdinand Hiller's piano-forte concerto in F sharp minor, played on a magnificent Steinway grand piano-forte with masterly facility and thorough command over the difficulties it presents, by Mr. Archer, who as a pianist ought to be recognised as equally deserving of the fame which is universally accorded to him as an organist. The second was a concerto for violoncello, by R. Volkmann, performed by Mr. Libotton. It was to be regretted that so highly accomplished a violoncellist should have chosen a concerto so exceedingly uninteresting that no brilliancy on the part of the player could make it acceptable. Hamilton Clarke's gavotte in E, which is an established favourite at these concerts, was so exquisitely played by the entire strings of the orchestra as to be loudly re-demanded. The vocal portions of the programme were supplied by Miss Emily Mott, Miss Blanche Lucas, Signor Fabrini, and Mr. Lewis Thomas.

* This brief sketch describes the work as actually performed—not as originally written, but in its abbreviated form.

CRYSTAL PALACE.

AT the twenty-third Saturday Concert, on the 25th of March, a tribute of respect, which some may, perhaps, have regarded rather as a "parting kick," was paid to the memory of the late C. E. Horsley, who died at New York on the 2nd of the same month, by introducing (for the first time at these concerts) the overture to "Euterpe"—an Ode to Music, composed by him for the inauguration festival of the Town Hall in Melbourne, 1870—together with a couple of songs. Beethoven's Choral Symphony, the principal vocal parts in which were sustained by Mlle. Johanna Levier, Miss Annie Butterworth, Mr. E. Lloyd, and Sig. Foli, was, however, the grand event of the afternoon's performance. This completed the series of Beethoven's nine symphonies, all of which have been brought to a hearing in the course of the winter.

The following concert also was not without its memorial, or "kick," as it might variously be regarded. The premature death of the English composer, Alfred Holmes, which took place in Paris on the 6th of March, served as an excuse for the introduction of his latest work, a concert overture, "Les Muses." It is an ambitious and elaborately-scored work, and not wanting in melodic ideas of the lighter kind. We cannot, however, think that the works of our countrymen, Horsley and Holmes—both skilful and talented musicians, but the one a weak imitation of Mendelssohn, and the other Frenchified and Spohrised German—are destined to be long-lived. Another novelty, which may be regarded as of far more interest and importance, was a concerto for violoncello and orchestra, Op. 193, by J. Raff, one of his most recent works. Of concertos for the violoncello, composed by and for virtuosos of that instrument, there exist enough and to spare. It is, however, an instrument which has been too much neglected by the greatest composers. Schumann, it will be remembered, wrote a violoncello concerto, which, as everything that he ever penned, is musically interesting, but from the ungrateful way in which it is written fails to satisfy the virtuoso from his point of view. Regarded from the musician's and the virtuoso's points of view combined, we can recall no more satisfactory work of its class than this last essay of Raff's. Between the solo violoncello part and the orchestral accompaniment the most admirable balance is maintained. Though less dependent upon thematic development than is generally the case with Raff's greater instrumental works, one cannot be blind to its artificial character and to the want of spontaneity often consequent thereupon. This is most noticeable in the first movement, which, as so often happens with Raff, commences with a trite and unpromising theme. On looking at the second subject one discovers that both must have been designed with a view to their being hereafter treated in conjunction. Hence the apparent exigency of sacrificing somewhat of both. The second movement, which is more independent, and contains some noble ideas exquisitely treated, is the gem of the work. The finale, but for an unfortunate reminiscence of one of Beethoven's violoncello sonatas, is full of life and vigour, and affords ample opportunities to the executant to display his virtuosity. Sig. Piatti's rendering of the work, which abounds in difficulties, was one of the most perfect displays of artistic executancy that we have ever witnessed, but one which could only be fully apparent to those who had the score before them. Not a nuance indicated by the composer missed, and the most intricate difficulties overcome with apparently perfect ease! That the band, too, played as if inspired, was not to be wondered at. The remaining instrumental works were the overture to Mozart's "Zauberföhrer," and Mendelssohn's "Scotch" symphony. The vocalists were Mme. Patey and Mme. Bianca Blume. The latter was heard for the first time in England. As the representative of Elsa, when Wagner took the Italians by storm at Barcelona and Florence with "Lohengrin" in 1872, she comes to us as a prima donna of no mean reputation. That better opportunities of substantiating her claims than were afforded by an aria of Verdi and a couple of songs by Schumann and Brahms, admirable as these were, will be accorded to her elsewhere, may confidently be anticipated.

Three works were heard "for the first time at these concerts," at the twenty-fifth concert—viz., Sir Julius Benedict's overture, "The Tempest;" Spohr's concerto for clarinet and orchestra, No. 1, in C minor, Op. 26; and an allegro for strings, in C minor, by Schubert. Whether Sir Julius Benedict's overture—which we fancy we heard some four or five years ago at a concert of the Philharmonic Society—was designed as an illustration of Shakespeare's "Tempest" we were not informed. Of its stormy character, with its conventional wind-whistling chromatic passages, there could be no doubt. That it impressed us pleasurable cannot be said. In Spohr's concerto Mr. C. A. Clinton—the worthy successor of the late M. Pape as first clarinettist in the Crystal Palace orchestra—made the most of an opportunity, too rarely accorded to wind instrumentalists, of appearing as a soloist. The allegro by Schubert, which belongs to an unfinished quartet, and is to be found in score at the end of the "Peters"

edition of Schubert's quartets, though composed in his twenty-fourth year, is in his best style. For its own sake it was very welcome, and admirably served to display the excellence of Mr. Manns' string band; but we should have preferred to make acquaintance with it in its original form for four instruments. To Mr. Chappell, who has by no means exhausted all that is to be drawn upon from Schubert's quartets, we look to accord this. The greater part of the afternoon was devoted to Beethoven's oratorio, *The Mount of Olives*. Of *Christus am Ölberge*, as the work was originally entitled, there are three English versions, not one of which can be regarded as altogether satisfactory. It was composed in 1830, about the same time as the first symphony, the first set of quartets, and the septett, when Beethoven was still to some extent under the influence of Haydn and Mozart. In the original text the three principal personages of the drama are the Saviour, St. Peter, and an angel. In the English version usually employed, a concession is made by assigning the part of the Saviour to a narrator, who relates in the third person what in the original is spoken in the first. The device is at best but a subterfuge. But the main objection rests with the music, which, in spite of many beauties, being for the most part theatrical in style, but ill accords with the solemnity of the subject treated. That Beethoven treated a sacred subject in a manner more free than becoming cannot be denied. Shortly before his death he is said to have expressed very strong regrets at having done so. The work is one for which, perhaps on this account, we have never felt any great admiration. The principal vocal parts on the present occasion were sustained by Mrs. Osgood, Mr. W. H. Cummings, and Sig. Foli. It certainly did not gain in solemnity of effect by a portion of the *Engedi* version being interpolated by Mr. Cummings.

Three works of importance, in which a chorus of male voices was employed, and which had not been heard here before, were reserved for the concluding concert of the series. These were Schumann's "Festival" overture, with chorus on the "Rhein-wein-lied;" Brahms's cantata, "Rinaldo," for tenor solo, chorus of male voices, and orchestra; and Mendelssohn's cantata, "To the Sons of Art" (*An die Künstler*), for male voices and brass instruments, Op. 68. Schumann's overture, first performed at the Lower Rhine Musical Festival at Düsseldorf, in May, 1853—memorable as being the only occasion in which, though holding the post of music director there, he appeared as conductor of his own works, including his piano-forte concerto in A minor, and his symphony in D minor—is based throughout on André's popular song of the last century. It seems to have been Schumann's aim to infuse a national character into this work; perhaps it is on this account that it cannot be regarded as one of his most individual creations. It was, nevertheless, welcome. Of Brahms's setting of Goethe's cantata, "Rinaldo," suggested by an episode in Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, we defer speaking in detail till a more favourable opportunity. It was performed under most depressing circumstances. More than half of the members of the chorus, who, as a rule here, it may be said, seem to delight in asserting their independence, failed to put in an appearance. A printed apology for their absence, on the score that the inclemency of the weather had prevented the attendance of the greater part of the chorus at the last rehearsal, was distributed, and the final chorus was omitted. In spite of, under these circumstances, a very inadequate performance, the impression made by the work was a very favourable one. That Mr. Manns will take the earliest opportunity of doing the fullest justice to it that it undoubtedly deserves may surely be counted upon. In the meantime, we must content ourselves with acknowledging the admirable and thoroughly artistic and finished manner in which Mr. Edward, Lloyd sustained the very difficult part of Rinaldo. The same shortcomings were, of course, apparent in Mendelssohn's cantata, a work for which we cannot say that we entertain the same admiration that we did when we heard it twenty years ago in Cologne.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

BRAHMS'S *Deutsches Requiem* was the chief item of interest at the second concert. Attention was first called to this remarkable work in these columns by our Vienna correspondent in April, 1871. As it was reviewed during the following month, and some description of it again given on the occasion of its production by the Philharmonic Society in 1873, we need say no more at present than that a further hearing of it has tended to confirm the opinion then expressed that it is the grandest sacred musical work that has been produced in Germany since the death of Mendelssohn. Its repetition was most welcome; but that after a lapse of three years this should have been left to the Philharmonic Society, by no means adds to the credit of those of our musical institutions which restrict themselves to the performance of oratorios and sacred choral works. The performance, in which the principal solo vocal parts were well sustained by Mrs. Osgood and Mr. Wadmore, was a vast improve-

ment upon that of 1873. By reason of its serious and generally sombre character, this *Deutsches Requiem* seems more fitted for use at a religious service than in the concert room; and apart from the difficulty of adequately presenting it, seems unlikely to become very popular. By those who heard it now, it seemed to be much more warmly appreciated than on the former occasion of its performance, but except by those who had already familiarised themselves with Brahms's peculiar style, and diligently read the score, it could hardly have been estimated at its full worth. Other special items of attraction and satisfaction were Professor Joachim's unrivalled rendering of Spohr's concerto in E minor, No. 7, and three of Brahms's Hungarian dances, arranged by Professor Joachim for violin and pianoforte. The remaining instrumental works were Beethoven's symphony in D, No. 2, and Mendelssohn's overture to *Ruy Blas*.

MONDAY AND SATURDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.

THE eighteenth season of these excellent concerts, during which no less than thirty-nine performances have been given, was brought to a close on the 20th ult. Though it has by no means been remarkable for the production of absolute novelties of importance, by the side of acknowledged masterpieces a fair proportion of half-familiar works, which only require to be better known to become general favourites, have been brought to a hearing. Thus at recent concerts were heard (for the second time) Brahms's quintett in F minor, Op. 34, for pianoforte and strings, and the same composer's sextet (for strings) in B flat. The quintett will doubtless take its place by the side of Brahms's two quartets, which have already become favourites; the sextet has found so much favour that Mr. Chappell should be encouraged to follow it up with its companion work in G. At an extra concert, considerably given in deference to the wishes of the most musically advanced among Mr. Chappell's audience, and which to many must have seemed the most interesting of the whole series, Beethoven's two posthumous quartets, in A minor, Op. 130, and in B flat, Op. 131, were brought to a hearing under the most favourable conditions, the executants being MM. Joachim, L. Ries, Strauss, and Piatti. Mme. Schumann, who has been the main attraction of late, has played a fair share of her husband's works, the merit of which is now never questioned. Among them it must suffice to notice selections from the "Novelleton," the "Fantasiestücke," and the "Carnaval." The concluding concert, at which solos were contributed by Mme. Schumann, Mlle. Marie Krebs, and Professor Joachim, three pieces of Rubinstein's for violoncello and pianoforte by Miss Agnes Zimmermann and Sig. Piatti, and songs by Mlle. Thekla Friedlaender and Mlle. Sophie Löwe, closed with Bach's concerto for two violins (MM. Joachim and Strauss) with double quartett accompaniment—a brilliant termination to the season's operations.

MADAME SCHUMANN'S RECITAL.

MME. SCHUMANN gave a "recital" (her only one this season) at St. James's Hall, on the 20th ult., but which, as she was assisted by Miss Agnes Zimmermann, Mlle. Thekla Friedlaender, and Sig. Piatti, partook more of the character of a concert than of a "recital," properly so called. Alone she was heard to the best advantage in a selection from Schumann's "Davidsbündler" dances—which, admirable as they are, are hardly so attractive as the "Carnaval" scenes—two canons (in B minor and A flat) for pedal pianoforte by the same master, and in Chopin's Waltz in A flat, Op. 42. With Sig. Piatti she was associated in Beethoven's early sonata in G minor, Op. 5, and with Miss Agnes Zimmermann in Brahms's Variations on a theme by Haydn, already familiar to us in their orchestral form, but now for the first time heard here as a pianoforte arrangement. Acknowledging their cleverness and the cleverness of their transcription, one could not but feel the want of orchestral colouring, which in the form in which we first heard them is one of their chief merits. Schumann's exquisitely charming "Abendlied," which, composed in 1849, originally appeared as a pianoforte duet in Op. 85—"Zwölf Vierhändige Clavierstücke für kleine und grosse Kinder"—and has been arranged both as a song and for almost every combination of instruments, was played by Sig. Piatti, accompanied by Sir Julius Benedict, in a manner which ensured a hearty re-demand. Songs by Lotti, Mendelssohn, and Schumann, were contributed by Mlle. Friedlaender.

AT the second of Mr. Wilhem Coenen's series of three concerts, there was no actual novelty among the concerted pieces, but to the majority of the audience Brahms's string quartett in E minor, Op. 51, No. 1—which we can only recall to have heard on one previous occasion, when it was brought forward by Mr. Coenen in 1874—

must have proved as good as a novelty. That in due course it will be followed by its companion work in A minor, Op. 51, No. 2—the more genial of the two, and which has only been heard here once, viz., at one of Mr. Henry Holmes's "Musical Evenings" of last year—there is every reason to hope. Though we have said there was no actual novelty among the concerted works, many must have listened for the first time, and with pleasure too, to Mr. A. C. Mackenzie's pianoforte quartett in E flat, successfully introduced by Mr. Coenen last year; to Schumann's "Märchenerzählungen," Op. 132, for pianoforte (Mr. Coenen), viola (Mr. Zerbini), and clarinet (Mr. Lazarus); a romance for violin (Herr Wiener), and pianoforte by Max Bruch; and a sarabande and gavotte for violoncello (Herr Daubert), by D. Popper. Two novelties were heard at the third concert—viz., a sonata in D major, Op. 183, for pianoforte and violoncello, by J. Raff; and a quartett in C minor, Op. 20, for pianoforte and strings, by F. Gerasheim; but of these we must defer speaking.

THE Newcastle Amateur Vocal Society—which, we believe, is the outcome, to a certain extent, of a vocal class which has existed under various auspices during the last two or three years, and which is now conducted by Mr. W. Rea, to whose labours during the fifteen years he has been there the great development of musical taste and talent which is now manifest in this town and district, is mainly due—gave their first concert on the 4th ult. The programme comprised Cherubini's *Requiem*, and a miscellaneous selection, consisting of part-songs by G. A. Macfarren, H. Smart, Pearsall, and Schumann, and pianoforte pieces. Among the most interesting of the latter was Schumann's andante and variations in B flat, for two pianofortes, performed by Mr. and Mrs. W. Rea. The performance has been spoken of by the local press in terms of high commendation. That a work so difficult and so worthy of attention as Cherubini's *Requiem* should have been selected for the inauguration concert says much for the seriousness of purpose entertained by this new society.

Musical Notes.

THE subscriptions to the Dykes Memorial Fund paid and promised to the Durham Committee alone up to Easter Eve amounted to almost £8,000—a manifest proof of the esteem in which Dr. Dykes's hymn-tunes are held by the people of England. Further contributions to the fund, which will be closed for England on the 31st inst., may be paid to the treasurer, J. W. Barnes, Esq., Bank, Durham.

A CORRESPONDENT writes in high terms of the début of Miss Jeannie Wetton at a concert at Müllhausen (Thuringia), when she sang an air from Gluck's *Paris and Helene*, and songs by Schumann and Brahms, with great success. She is studying in Leipzig under Herr Götz (Mlle. Friedlaender's master), and on her return to London, it is thought, will take a high position as a vocalist.

MESSRS. BREITKOPF & HÄRTEL, of Leipzig, invite subscriptions for a first complete and critically revised edition of the works of Mozart, to be issued by them in all respects in a uniform manner with their complete edition of Beethoven. Of the 626 works attributed to Mozart more than one-third have never been published. The subscription price of this monumental edition, which with all possible dispatch it is hoped to complete in a few years, it is promised shall not exceed £50.

FOR a march which he was commissioned by the committee of the Philadelphia Exhibition to compose Wagner has received the sum of £1,000 dollars. Twenty years ago he received but 300 thalers for *Lohengrin*. As a warning to future musical historians, *Die Tonkunst* points to the fact that Wagner's copyist, J. Wieniawski, has so assimilated his style of handwriting to that of the master, that the difference between the two is imperceptible.

WE regret to record the death of Mr. W. Goodwin, the well-known musical copyist and librarian, which took place on the 1st of April, at the age of seventy-nine. As the conductor's right-hand man, probably none but conductors know how much of the success of many of our best concerts and of our provincial musical festivals has been due to his well-known punctuality and business-like management. As a reliable authority upon all the chief musical events in England of the last half-century, he was always to be depended upon, always obliging, and always ready to give inquirers the benefit of his retentive memory. As a practical musician his skill in making orchestral arrangements was remarkable. It is probably not generally known that for many years after the first production of *Der Freischütz*, when the original score was not obtainable, the concert performances of excerpts from that opera

were given with band parts arranged by him from the piano-forte edition. The same was the case, too, with Gounod's *Faust*. He was the possessor of a valuable library of scores and parts, &c. His business, which has been removed to more commodious premises at 71, Great Queen Street, Holborn, will henceforth be carried on by his son under the style of Goodwin and Tabb.

By the death of Dr. S. S. Wesley, which took place at Gloucester on the 19th ult., Church music has lost one of its greatest exponents both as a composer and as an organist.

In the symphony competition at the Alexandra Palace the first prize has been awarded to Mr. Francis Davenport, son-in-law of Professor Macfarren, and the second to Mr. C. Villiers Stanford, organist of Trinity College, Cambridge. The judges were Professor G. A. Macfarren, Mus. Doc., and Professor Joachim.

We have received an interesting specification of an organ recently erected in the Metropolitan Church, Toronto, by S. R. Warren & Co., of Montreal, under the supervision of Mr. F. H. Torrington, organist of the Metropolitan Church and conductor of the Philharmonic Society. It contains 3,315 pipes, and is the largest and most complete that has yet been produced by Canadian skill and workmanship. Judging from the fact that, during the two years that Mr. F. H. Torrington has had the charge of the Philharmonic Society, which numbers about 150 voices and 40 orchestral performers, such works as the *Messiah*, *Creation*, *Elijah*, *St. Paul*, *Fridolin*, &c., in addition to miscellaneous selections, have been each three or four times performed, it would seem that strenuous efforts are being made towards the furtherance of musical art in Toronto, and that in the right direction.

CASSELL'S FAMILY MAGAZINE for April contains an article "How to Qualify for the Musical Profession," which will be read with interest by intending musical students. The writer points to two modes by which professional training may be received—viz., private tuition, and attendance at an academy or college. On the first head, under which might have been included the plan often pursued of apprenticeship to a cathedral organist or other musical professor, nothing is advanced beyond the advice to be careful to select a teacher whose qualifications are beyond all doubt. In regard to the second and more preferable course to be pursued, some particulars are given in respect to existing institutions, such as the Royal Academy of Music, the London Academy of Music, Trinity College, London, the College of Organists, the National Training School at South Kensington, the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, &c., and as to the mode of proceeding to degrees at the Universities, for which some useful hints are given. As, however, a musician's education can hardly be said to be complete without some foreign experience, we cannot but think that the value of the article would have been greatly enhanced by the addition of some particulars respecting the Continental Conservatoires.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A.D.C.—A correspondent in Leipzig writes to correct the false impression, derived from M. Schott & Co.'s catalogue of Wagner's Works, that neither of the songs from *Siegfried* is published separately.

FIG.—The writer's incompetency to deal with technical points is notorious. Few probably regard his articles, which are often amusing enough, from a serious point of view.

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The Editor cannot undertake to return Rejected Communications.

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